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THE ARDEN SHAKESPEARE
GENERAL EDITOR : W. J. CRAIG
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A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

THE WORKS

OF

SHAKESPEARE

A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

EDITED BY

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INTRODUCTION

THE characteristic features of this edition of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* are, first, an attempt to produce a text in advance of anything which has hitherto been published; and, secondly, an attempt to elucidate some of the long-standing difficulties connected with the interpretation of well-known passages in the play. Such, *e.g.*, are (*a*) the corrections of "*fair spirit*," II. i. 1; of "room *good* fairy," II. i. 58; of "*lack-love kill-courtesy*," II. ii. 76; of "*No, No, he'll . . .*," III. ii. 257; "*poor simple duty*," V. i. 91; of "*lily mows*," V. i. 328: (*b*) the elucidations of "*hold or cut bow-strings*," I. ii. 112; "*the human mortals want their winter cheer*," II. i. 101; the source of the well-known "*fearful wild-fowl*," III. i. 33; the attempted elucidation of "*wondrous strange snow*," V. i. 59; and the true meaning of "*late deceased*" in V. i. 53. It remains to be seen how far the judgement and knowledge of the editor fall short of attaining that ideal standard of textual criticism which every editor of Shakespeare worthy of the name ought always to keep in mind; a standard which is only to be attained, to quote the words of Dr. H. H. Furness (*New Variorum* ed., Preface, xxi), by the exercise of that "exquisite nicety demanded at the present day in emending Shakespeare's text,—a nicety of judgment, a nicety of

knowledge of Elizabethan literature, a nicety of ear, which alone bars all foreigners from the task, and, beyond all, a thorough mastery of Shakespeare's style and ways of thinking, which alone should bar all the rest of us." It can only be attained by the exercise, as Mr. Churton Collins puts it, in his essay on "The Porson of Shakespearean Criticism" (*Essays and Studies*, 1895, p. 281), "of that fine and rare faculty, if it be not rather an exquisite temper and harmony of various faculties, which seems to admit a critic for a moment into the very sanctuary of genius. In less figurative language, it is the faculty of divining and recovering, as by the power of some subtle sympathy, the lost touch—the touch of magic, often in the expression of poetry so precarious and delicate, that, dependent on a single word, a stroke of the pen may efface, just as a stroke of the pen may restore it." If the standard cannot be attained, it can at least be kept in sight. But the critic of this latter day does not keep the ideal in sight. He is usually satisfied to print the old corruptions, and to adopt the despairing position of Dr. Furness when he says (Preface, p. xxii), "Moreover, by this time the text of Shakespeare has become so fixed and settled that I think it safe to predict that unless a veritable MS. of Shakespeare's own be discovered, not a single future emendation will be generally accepted in critical editions. Indeed, I think, even a wider range may be assumed, so as to include in this list all emendations, that is, substitutions of words, which have been proposed since the days of Collier. . . . There is the text, and we must comprehend it if we can."

Now the text of Shakespeare is by no means "fixed and settled." Far from it. Even in *A Midsummer-Night's*

Dream, the text of which has reached us in a state of comparative correctness and purity, there are passages which are admittedly corrupt, but which have hitherto defied the efforts of all the critics and commentators to fix and settle. The true course for an editor to adopt in the matter of textual criticism, is neither the despairing attitude of rigid conservatism, nor yet the "wild and whirling freedom of exsufflicate and blown surmises," but rather that sober boldness and spirit of inquiry commingled of blood and judgement, the result, so far as he can attain it, of that nicety of knowledge and judgement of which Dr. Furness speaks. To make his text and textual notes of any permanent value, he must at least stamp them with his own individuality. He must, in the words of the admonition beheld by Spenser's Britomart on the "yron dores" in the castle of Busyrane (*Faerie Queene*, III. c. xi. st. 54):

> *Be bold, be bold*, and everywhere *be bold;*
> . . . . . .
> *Be not too bold.*

He must have no timidity in rejecting questionable readings. But,—and there is every virtue in this "but,"—there must be no restless ingenuity or imperfect knowledge. He must be neither over-bold nor over-cautious; and, above all, he must remember that nothing is to be gained by perpetuating error. And this is exactly what he continues to do. Now, in this respect, we have, once and for all, the old texts with us. They are our *κτήματα ἐς ἀεί*. Nothing short of a world's cataclysm can deprive us of them. But nothing is more certain than that we have *not* got the text of the plays as they left their author's hand. I

cordially agree with Dyce in his remarks in the Preface to his second edition, 1866, speaking of the difference between legitimate emendation and extravagant alteration: "In short, I now believe that an exact reprint of the old text with its multifarious errors forms a more valuable contribution to literature than a semi-corrected text, which, purged here and there of the grossest blunders, continues still, almost in every page, to offend against sense and metre. If the most eminent classical scholars, in editing the dramas of antiquity, have not scrupled frequently to employ conjecture for the restoration of the text, I cannot understand why an editor of Shakespeare—whose plays have come down to us no less disfigured by corruption than the masterpieces of the Athenian stage—should hesitate to adopt the happiest of the emendations proposed from time to time during more than a century and a half" [Dyce would now say "during nearly two centuries"] "by men of great sagacity and learning,—always assuming that the deviations from the early editions are duly recorded." The true function, therefore, of the well-equipped editor—"all-furnish'd, all in arms"—is, not to perpetuate error by reprinting admitted corruptions, but to strive with all his might after the attainment of a perfect text, and only to leave it, according to the measure of his abilities, in such a state as he conceives it might have left the great master's hand. The text is, after all, the *unum necessarium*, the one thing needful, "the weightier matter of the law": so far indeed is it from being "the mint, anise, and cumin of pedantic criticism," as a recent editor puts it. (See Mr. Bellyse Baildon's Introduction to *Titus Andronicus*, Arden edition, p. x.)

The text of this play has reached us in a state more perfect than perhaps that of any other play of Shakespeare. This may be due to its having been printed, in all probability, either from the authentic MS. of Shakespeare himself, or at least from an accurate copy, or, perhaps, copies of the actors' parts, transcribed in the theatre from the original MS. At any rate we are primarily concerned with three important originals—if they may be so styled—namely, the two Quartos, both printed in 1600, in Shakespeare's own lifetime, and the First Folio, printed in 1623, seven years after his death. Strictly speaking, there is only one "original," the First Quarto. The First Quarto (Q 1), sometimes called "Fisher's Quarto," was the initial trade venture of a young stationer called Thomas Fisher, and was issued under a licence to print granted by the Master Wardens of the Stationers' Company in October 1600, such licence being the nearest approach in later Elizabethan times to the system of modern copyright. In Arber's *Transcript of the Stationers' Register*, vol. iii. p. 174, the licence runs as follows:—

8 Octobris

THOMAS FFYSSHER. Entred for his copie vnder the handes of Master RODES | and the Wardens A booke called *A myd-sommer nightes Dreame* . . vj[d]

The title-page of Q 1 runs as follows:—"A | Midsommer nights | dreame. | As it hath beene fundry times pub- | *lickely acted, by the Right honoura-* | ble, the Lord Chamberlaine his | feruants. | *Written by William Shakespeare.*

[Then follows the device of a king-fisher, with the motto, *Motos soleo componere fluctus.*] ¶Imprinted at London, for *Thomas Fisher*, and are to | be foulde at his fhoppe, at the Signe of the White Hart, | in *Fleeteſtreete.* 1600."

The text of the other Quarto (Q 2), sometimes called "Roberts's Quarto," seems to have been founded on that of Fisher, and was apparently unauthorised, as no entry of any licence to print it has been found in the Registers. Its title-page is identical with that of Q 1, save that it bears a heraldic device, with the motto, *Post Tenebras Lvx*, and it is "*Printed by Iames Roberts*, 1600."[1]

It is tolerably certain that Fisher's "authorised" Quarto takes priority in point of time, notwithstanding that some eminent critics are inclined to think otherwise. Halliwell, for instance, is apparently of this opinion, on the ground of the superior correctness of Fisher's Quarto, his inference being that it was printed from a corrected copy of Q 2; and Fleay likewise, for the somewhat surprising reason that printers' errors are far more likely to have been introduced than corrected in a second edition. Broadly speaking, Q 1 must always be regarded as our authentic and original text.

Knight well remarks (*Introduction*, p. 331, *circ.* 1840): "One thing is perfectly clear to us—that the original of these editions, whichever it might be, was printed from a genuine copy and carefully superintended through the press. The text appears to us as perfect as it is possible to be, considering the state of typography in that day. There is one remarkable evidence of this. The prologue to

[1] A false statement, for it has now been proved to have really appeared in 1619, as part of a volume composed of one other reprint dated 1608, three dated 1600, one undated, and three dated 1619. See for details and proofs Mr. Pollard's *Shakespeare's Fight with the Pirates*, ed. 2, 1920, viii *et seq.* and 99 *et seq.*

the interlude of the Clowns is purposely made inaccurate in its punctuation throughout. . . . It was impossible to have effected the object better than by the punctuation of Roberts's edition; and this is precisely one of those matters of nicety in which a printer would have failed, unless he had followed an extremely clear copy or his proofs had been corrected by an author or an editor."

There are certain distinguishing features and also points of resemblance characteristic of these three texts. In Q 1 the entrances of the characters are indicated, but the exits are often omitted; the text is superior, and likewise the punctuation; but the spelling is archaic, possibly as the result of having been set up by the ear from dictation; and the typography is much inferior to that of Q 2, the founts of type having been mixed, and the type old and battered. In Q 2 the exits are far more carefully marked, and it is superior generally in stage-directions; whilst the punctuation is inferior, though the type is comparatively clear. Q 2 corrects some of the mistakes in Q 1; but, on the other hand, it commits more than it corrects. Q 2 has the larger page, but both texts are, generaliy speaking, line for line; in both the stage-directions are in the imperative, as is customary in stage copies; and in both there are numerous examples of spelling by the ear, as the result of the practice of the sixteenth and seventeenth century printers not composing by the eye from a written or printed copy, but by the ear from dictation. In respect of the superior stage-directions of Q 2, it may not be unlawful to conjecture that Roberts had taken a copy of Fisher's Quarto to a theatrical representation, or had otherwise procured a prompter's copy and improved the stage-directions of his edition accordingly.

The proofs are abundantly clear that the text of the Folio is simply that of a copy of Q 2, which had been in use by the prompter as a stage copy; and it is doubtful whether, in the printing of the Folio, the latter obtained more than a superficial and cursory revision. If so, how is it to be reconciled with the statement of Shakespeare's "fellowes," Heminge and Condell, in their well-known address "to the great Variety of Readers," prefixed to the First Folio, namely, that the Folio text came directly from Shakespeare's own "papers," which they had received from him with "scarse a blot"? It may be, as Furness suggests (Preface, p. xii), that Heminge and Condell (being, in all probability, well acquainted with Roberts's trade methods,[1] and the manner in which his Quarto originated), nevertheless believed they were telling the substantial truth, inasmuch as in using the printed text of Q 2, "they were virtually using Shakespeare's MS., if they in fact knew that this text was printed directly from his MS., and had been for years used in their theatre as a stage copy, with possibly additional stage business marked on the margin for the use of the prompter, and here and there sundry emendations, noted possibly by the author's own hand, who, by these changes, theoretically authenticated all the rest of the text." However this may be, it is clear from many proofs that the text of the Folio has its direct origin in a stage copy of Q 2. Furness gives a noteworthy example in III. i. 165, where Titania calls for Pease-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! (Qq, Ff) and Mustardseed! and the four little fairies enter, exclaiming in turn, "Ready," "And I," "And I," "And I."

[1] See the previous note and Pollard, *op. cit.* p. xiii, for a change of view with regard to Roberts and his connection with the players, exonerating him from the charge of piracy.

In the folio, Titania's call is converted into a stage-direction, with *Enter* before it, and the fairies as they come in call out "Ready," without having been summoned. But in the Qq they enter in obedience to Titania's call, and the only stage-direction is, *Enter foure Fairyes.* All proper names in the Qq, Ff are printed in italics, as are also all stage-directions. Now in Q 1 the Queen's summons to her attendants is correctly printed as the concluding line of her speech, and in italics, thus: "*Pease-blossome*, *Cobweb*, *Moth* and *Mustard-seede?*" In Q 2 the line is also printed as concluding Titania's speech, but the compositor overlooked both the "and" in Roman type, which he changed to italic, and the note of interrogation at the end, which he changed to a full stop, thus converting it into a genuine stage-direction; and as such it was undoubtedly copied by the compositor of the Folio, who prefixed *Enter*, and changed *Enter foure fairies* into *and foure Fairies*, thereby making the number of fairies eight in all.

Another kind of variation between the stage copy of Q 2 and the Folio is apparent in the first scene of the play, where Theseus bids Philostrate, his Master of the Revels, "Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments" (line 12). Philostrate retires, and at once Egeus enters. Except in the last scene, these two characters are never on the stage together; so that down to the last scene one actor would "double" the parts. In the last scene one must be omitted; this is Philostrate, as the least important. In an *acting* text the prefixes to the speeches must therefore be changed, and in this last scene the prefix *Egeus* must be substituted for Philostrate. No doubt this took place in the acting copy of Q 2; but in v. i. 76, the Folio has

retained *Phi.* instead of changing it into *Egeus*, as in the remainder of the scene. In v. i. 126, the Folio has the stage-direction "*Tawyer with a Trumpet before them*" before the entrance of Pyramus and the others. Tawyer was the name of one of the company, or at any rate a subordinate in the pay of Heminge. (See Halliwell, *Outlines of Shakespeare's Life*, p. 500). In III. i. 113, the Folio has the stage-direction "*Enter Piramus with the Asse head*"—significant of the prompter's knowledge of only one ass's head being amongst the theatrical properties.

Further, there is one line in the Qq which is entirely omitted in the Folio, namely, III. ii. 344, *Her.* "I am amazed and know not what to say." *Exeunt. Exeunt* is also omitted in the Folio, but it is essential as a stage-direction; hence the conclusion is inevitable that as the line appears in the Qq its omission in the Folio is a mere compositor's blunder.

Lastly, it may be noted that in v. i. 311 the stage-direction in the Folio is "*Enter Thisbe*," and that this direction is printed before the speech of Theseus; thereby indicating that the actor was to be ready before he has to make his actual appearance on the stage; and showing indubitably that the Folio must have been printed from a stage copy.

The First Folio text was reproduced, more or less correctly, in the Second Folio of 1632 (F 2), the Third Folio of 1664 (F 3), and the Fourth Folio of 1685 (F 4).

The title of this play has given rise to a considerable amount of comment and conjecture. "I know not," says Dr. Johnson, "why Shakespeare calls the play A *Midsummer* Night's Dream when he so carefully informs us that it happened on the night preceding *May* day."

Farmer remarks, "The title of this play seems no more intended to denote the precise *time of the action* than that of *The Winter's Tale*, which we find was at the season of sheep-shearing." "In *Twelfth Night*," says Steevens, "Olivia observes of Malvolio's seeming frenzy that it is a very *Midsummer* madness. That time of the year we may therefore suppose was anciently thought productive of mental vagaries resembling the scheme of Shakespeare's play. To this circumstance it might have owed its title." Malone thought, no doubt wrongly, that the title was suggested by the time when it was first introduced on the stage. "To the inheritors of the English tongue," says Furness (Preface, p. v), "the potent sway of fairies on Midsummer eve is familiar. The very title is in itself a charm, and frames our minds to accept without question any delusion of the night, and this it is which shields it from criticism." And he further remarks (Preface, p. viii), "The discrepancy noted by Dr. Johnson can be, I think, explained by recalling the distinction, always in the main preserved in England, between festivities and rites attending the May day celebrations and those of the twenty-fourth of June: the former were allotted to the day-time and the latter to the night-time. As the wedding sports of Theseus, with hounds and horns and interludes, were to take place by daylight, May day was the fit time for them; as the cross purposes of the lovers were to be made straight with fairy charms during slumber, night was chosen for them, and both day and night were woven together, and one potent glamour floated over all in the shadowy realm of a midsummer night's dream." In effect, therefore, Shakespeare's title meant no more than a dream which might be

dreamt, or the shadowy events of which might pass, in any night in the height of summer—"the middle summer" (II. i. 82). This, I think, is satisfactory enough for English readers who are not enslaved to the idea that Shakespeare's ways of thinking are other than Shakespeare's ways, and who will gladly leave to the Germans their *Sommer Nacht's Traum* and all the mass of irrelevant discussion thereon. The English reader will continue to rejoice in his English poet. "Robin Goodfellow" is enough for him. He will leave to the Germans their very German "Ruprecht" and vulgar "Walpurgisnacht's Traum"; and he will decline to look at Shakespeare through the medium, as Furness would put it, of fantastic German distortions.

Nor need the duration of the action of the play cause us any real concern. No doubt Shakespeare is emphatic enough in his opening as to the *four* happy days which will bring in another moon, and the *four* nights which will quickly *dream* away the time: and whether he forgot his initial outline and only assigned *one* night to the four days, or leaves us to imagine them, or dream them, or intimates them to us by "swift fleeting allusions which induce the belief almost insensibly that a new dawn has arisen," seems to me a matter of the smallest consequence. It is a matter for the practical dramatist, who knows the wants of the stage. We know that such dramatic workmanship is a feature of many of Shakespeare's plays; *e.g.* in the *Merchant of Venice* three hours are the equivalent of three months, and in *Othello* many days are compressed into something like a day and a half. Such compression is a vital dramatic necessity. As Furness aptly remarks (Preface, p. xxxii), "There are allusions in the second Act, undeniably,

to the near approach of a dawn, and again there are allusions in the third Act, undeniably, to the near approach of a dawn; wherefore, since divisions into acts indicate progress in the action, or they are meaningless, I think we are justified in considering these allusions, in different acts, as referring to two separate dawns; that of Wednesday and that of Thursday, the only ones we need before the May-day horns are heard on Friday." In a word, the cardinal fact to be remembered in this respect is, that Shakespeare wrote for his audience and not for the reader in the closet—for the imaginative spectator, and not for the coldly-comprehensive critic or scholar. In fact, the whole truth of the matter is concisely stated by Professor Hall Griffin, quoted by Professor Dowden in the Introduction (p. xxii) to his edition of *Hamlet* in the Arden Shakespeare: "Shakespeare is at fault; he did not trouble himself to reconcile . . . inconsistencies which practical experience as an actor would tell him do not trouble the spectator." Or, as Dowden himself still more concisely states it in the Introduction (p. xxxi) to his edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, "the dramatist knew that spectators in the theatre do not regulate their imagination by a chronometer." Mr. P. A. Daniel's note on the duration of the action, taken from the *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1877–79, Part ii. p. 147, will be found in the Appendix, and may be found useful by or interesting to the curious student.

The primary, if not indeed the one positive piece of external evidence in connection with the date of composition of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* is the well-known reference by Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia*, or *Wit's*

Treasury (p. 282), registered in September 1598. It runs:—"As *Plautus* and *Seneca* are accounted the best for *Comedy* and *Tragedy* among the *Latines*, so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage: for Comedy, witnes his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love Labors lost*, his *Love Labors wonne*, his *Midsummers Night Dreame*, and his *Merchant of Venice*; for Tragedy, his *Richard the 2*, *Richard the 3*, *Henry the 4*, *King John*, *Titus Andronicus*, and his *Romeo and Juliet*." That is the external evidence, implying as it does the existence of the play in 1598; and it is simply a matter of conjecture how long Meres may have composed his book before it was registered, and how long before the book's composition the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* had been written and acted. It is noteworthy, however, that the play stands fifth in Meres's list of comedies; and this fact affords, I think, some slight indication of Meres's belief, knowledge, or recollection that it was not amongst the very earliest of Shakespeare's plays. It is also noteworthy that it stands eighth in the list of comedies as printed in the First Folio.

Let us see, then, how far the internal evidence of the play itself enables us to form an opinion as to the date of composition. There are certain lines and allusions which furnish clues more or less satisfactory; and the most important of these will now be considered; the general conclusions to be drawn from them being to justify the belief that the play was composed in the autumn of 1594–95, and was in all probability acted in the succeeding month of January, if not earlier.

1. The first and most important allusion is contained in

II. i. 81–117, namely, Titania's description of the disastrous effects on the weather caused by her quarrel with Oberon. There are several contemporary descriptions of an excessively wet and cold summer occurring in the year 1594. Evidence of this kind cannot, of course, be regarded as conclusive; but I think it certainly comes within the region of lawful conjecture; and taken in conjunction with the other points and allusions occurring in the play, I think it affords a reasonably strong presumption that the above date cannot be far wrong. Titania's description, which, in its place, is not particularly dramatic or requisite, would at any rate have special point for audiences hearing the play late in 1594 or early in 1595, and not likely to have forgotten the unseasonable weather of the previous summer; and this and the fact that the play is almost entirely concerned with out-of-door existence are, I think, presumptions in favour of the supposition that Shakespeare's thoughts were running on the "distemperature" of the previous months, and that he adopted it as useful dramatic material; and this notwithstanding that there seems to be recorded "a faire harvest" in 1594. This latter, in any event, would not strike men's minds so forcibly or *universally* as the "distemperature" of the seasons. The contemporary descriptions are as follows:—

(*a*) Stowe's *Annals*, 1594 (ed. 1631, pp. 766 *sqq.*): "In this moneth of March was many great stormes of winde which ouerturned trees, steeples, barnes, houses, &c., namely in Worcestershire, in Beaudley forrest many Oakes were ouerturned. . . . The 11 of Aprill, a raine continued very sore more than 24 houres long and withall, such a winde from the north, as pearced the wals of houses, were they

neuer so strong. . . . In the moneth of May, namely, on the second day, came downe great water flouds, by reason of sodaine shoures of haile and raine that had fallen, which bare downe houses yron milles. . . . This yeere in the moneth of May, fell many great shoures of raine, but in the moneths of June and July, much more; for it commonly rained euerie day, or night, till S. *Iames* day, and two daies after togither most extreamly, all which, notwithstanding in the moneth of August there followed a faire haruest, but in the moneth of September fell great raines, which raised high waters, such as staied the carriages, and bare downe bridges, at Cambridge, Ware, and elsewhere, in many places. Also the price of graine grewe to be such, as a strike or bushell of Rie was sold for fiue shillings, a bushel of wheat for sixe, seuen, or eight shillings, &c., for still it rose in price, which dearth happened (after the common opinion) more by meanes of ouermuch transporting, by our owne merchants for their priuate gaine, than through the vnseasonablenesse of the weather passed."

(*b*) The extracts printed by Strype (*Ann.* v. iv. p. 211) from Dr. King's *Lectures upon Ionas* (preached at York in 1594, and published in 1618, and referring in the marginal note to "the yeare of the Lord 1593 and 1594"): "The moneths of the year haue not yet gone about, wherein the Lord hath bowed the heauens, and come down amongst vs with more tokens and earnests of his wrath intended, then the agedst man of our land is able to recount of so small a time. For say, if euer the windes, since they blew one against the other, haue beene more common, and more tempestuous, as if the foure endes of heauen had conspired to turne the foundations of the earth vpside downe;

thunders and lightnings neither seasonable for the time, and withall most terrible, with such effects brought forth, that the childe vnborne shall speake of it. The anger of the clouds hath beene powred downe vpon our heads, both with abundance and (sauing to those that felt it) with incredible violence; the aire threatned our miseries with a blazing starre; the pillars of the earth tottered in many whole countries and tracts of our Ilande; the arrowes of a woeful pestilence haue beene caste abroad at large in all the quarters of our realme, euen to the emptying and dispeopling of some parts thereof."

(*c*) Dr. Simon Forman's observations on the year 1594 (in the Ashmolean MS. No. 384, quoted by Halliwell in his Introduction to *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, p. 6, ed. 1841): "Ther was moch sicknes but lyttle death, moch fruit and many plombs of all sorts this yeare and small nuts, but fewe walnuts. This monethes of June and July were very wet and wonderfull cold like winter, that the 10 dae of Julii many did syt by the fyer, yt was so cold; and soe was yt in Maye and June; and scarce too fair dais together all that tyme, but yt rayned every day more or lesse. Yf yt did not raine, then was yt cold and cloudye. Mani murders were done this quarter. There were many gret fludes this sommer, and about Michelmas, thorowe the abundaunce of raine that fell sodeinly; the brige of Ware was broken downe, and at Stratford Bowe, the water was never seen so byg as yt was; and in the lattere end of October, the waters burste downe the bridg at Cambridge. In Barkshire were many gret waters, wherewith was moch harm done sodenly."

(*d*) Thomas Churchyard's *Charitie*, 1595:

> A colder time in world was neuer seene;
> The skies do lowre, the sun and moone waxe dim;
> Sommer scarce knowne but that the leaues are greene
> The winter's waste driues water ore the brim;
> Upon the land great flotes of wood may swim.
> Nature thinks scorne to do hir dutie right
> Because we haue displeasde the Lord of light.

Of course, evidence of this kind cannot be in any sense conclusive, but it affords, I think, a striking example of Shakespeare's skill and business ability in taking advantage, for dramatic purposes, of current or contemporary events, which must, at the time, have made a strong impression on men's minds. For somewhat similar references we may compare the "earthquake" in *Romeo and Juliet*, I. iii. 23; and "these late eclipses" in *King Lear*, I. ii. 113; and Craig's note thereon.

2. Amongst the "revels" or "sports" proposed in the "brief" of Theseus's master of the revels, we have the well-known lines in V. i. 52, 53:

> The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
> Of learning, late deceased in beggary.

I think there is here a clear allusion to Spenser's *Teares of the Muses*, published in 1591, and that the allusion is skilfully adapted to refer to the death of Robert Greene, which occurred in September 1592. The idea that it refers to the death of Spenser himself, namely, in 1599, is obviously quite inadmissible. I agree with Knight in thinking that the "expressions are too precise and limited to refer to the tears of the Muses for the decay of knowledge and art." "Greene," says Knight, "a man of learning" [he was

utriusque Academiæ in Artibus Magister, and "For judgement Jove, for learning deepe he still Apollo seemde": Greene's *Funeralls*, 1594], "and one whom Shakespeare, in the generosity of his nature, might wish to point at kindly, died in 1592, in a condition that might truly be called beggary. But how was his death, any more than that of Spenser, to be the occasion of 'Some Satire keen and critical'? Every student of our literary history will remember the famous controversy of Nash and Gabriel Harvey, which was begun by Harvey's publication in 1592, of '*Foure Letters and certain Sonnets, especially touching Robert Greene and other parties by him abused.*' Robert Greene was dead; but Harvey came forward, in revenge of an incautious attack of the unhappy poet, 'to satirize him in his grave, to hold up his vices and misfortunes to the public scorn. . . .' 'Truly I have been ashamed,' observed Harvey, 'to hear some ascertayned reports of hys most woefull and rascall estate: how the wretched fellow, or shall I say the Prince of *beggars*, laid all to gage for some few shillings: . . . and would pitifully *beg* a penny pott of Malmesie: and could not gett any of his old acquaintance to comfort, or visite him in his extremity but Mistris Appleby, and the mother of Infortunatus.'" Halliwell thinks "there is nothing in the consideration that the poet had been attacked by Greene as the 'upstart crow' to render Knight's theory improbable. The allusion was certainly not conceived in an unkind spirit; and the death of one who at most was rather jealous than bitterly inimical, under such afflicting circumstances, there can be no doubt would have obliterated all traces of animosity from a mind so generous as was that of Shakespeare." Halli-

well also agrees in the supposition that there is a reference to Spenser's poem. As to this, I think it is not too much to assume that Shakespeare was, since his appearance in London and the dedication of all his powers to the stage and the drama, a keen student of contemporary literature. He must have been well acquainted with Spenser's poems. It will not be forgotten that a couple of years after the publication of the *Teares of the Muses* appeared his *Venus and Adonis*, which is written in the metre of the *Teares*. The latter poem stands No. 2 in the volume of "*Complaints: containing sundrie small poemes of the world's vanitie whereof the next page maketh mention*, by Ed: Sp: imprinted for William Ponſonbie 1591." It is dedicated "to the Right Honorable the Lady Strange." The poem No. 3 in the volume is "Virgil's Gnat long since dedicated to the Most Noble and Excellent Lord the Earle of Leicester *late deceased*." The significance of the last words of this dedication will appear when it is remembered that Leicester died in 1588, the year of the Armada. If Spenser could refer to him as "late deceased" *three* years after his death, it is not a great stretch of probability to assume that Shakespeare might reasonably, at the end of 1594, use the exact words in reference to Greene's death in September 1592. *That* event would be still fresh in the recollection of the literary and theatrical world of London. Therefore even on this ground alone, if on no other, we may fairly say that *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* is to be referred to the autumn or winter of 1594–95. The significance of Spenser's dedication of the *Teares* to Lady Strange will also presently appear.

3. Judging from the frame of the play, and notably

from the opening lines and the last act, winding up as it does with Oberon's "Epithalamium," it is not improbable that it was, at least eventually, intended for the celebration of the marriage of some nobleman of Elizabeth's court; but I rather incline to the belief that it was not so in the first instance; and that, marriage or no marriage, we should have had *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, though, perhaps, not exactly in its present form. "If," says Furness, "a noble marriage before 1598 can be found to which there are unmistakeable allusions in the play, we shall go far to confining the *Date of Composition* within narrow limits." Various attempts have been made to discover the marriage in question. The suggestion of Fleay is, in my opinion, by far the most probable yet made. In his *Life and Work of Shakespeare* (1886, p. 81), he says: "January 26 was the date of the marriage of William Stanley, Earl of Derby, at Greenwich. Such events were usually celebrated with the accompaniment of plays or interludes, masques written specially for the occasion not having yet become fashionable. The company of players employed at these nuptials would certainly be the Chamberlain's (*i.e.* the company to which Shakespeare belonged), who had, so lately as the year before (*i.e.* 1594) been in the employ of the Earl's brother Ferdinand. No play known to us is so fit for the purpose as *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, which in its present form is certainly of this date. About the same time Edward Russel, Earl of Bedford, married Lucy Harington. Both marriages may have been enlivened by this performance. . . . The date of the play here given is again confirmed by the description of the weather (in II. i. 81 *sqq.*). . . . Chute's *Cephalus and Procris* was entered on the *Stationers*

Registers, 28 Sept. 1593; Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, 22nd October 1593; Marlowe and Nash's *Dido* was printed in 1594. All these stories are alluded to in the play. The date of the Court performance must be in the winter of 1594–95."

Marriage is the theme of the play. It is initiated by the coming marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta, and it is wound up not only by their marriage, but by those of the pairs of lovers. If Fleay's hypothesis be correct, may not this have some slight reference to the double wedding of 1594–95?

William Stanley was the younger brother of Ferdinand, Lord Strange, and by the death of his father in September 1593, and of his brother Ferdinand in April 1594, he became sixth Earl of Derby. Next year he married Elizabeth Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford, and Stowe, in his *Annals*, thus records the event:

> "The 26 of January William Earl of Derby married the Earl of Oxford's daughter at the Court then at Greenwich, which marriage feast was there most royally kept."

It may, therefore, with some reason be conjectured, but only conjectured, that Elizabeth herself was present, and that the royal ears listened to the graceful though somewhat irrelevant tribute to the "fair vestal throned by the west" (II. i. 158). Inasmuch as the "marriage feast was most royally kept," in all likelihood one of the entertainments was *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. Again, on the assumption that the play was performed at Greenwich and at William Stanley's wedding, it is not a further

stretch of probability to assume the presence of the Dowager Countess of Derby, the widow of the late Earl, who was Lady Strange at the date of the dedication to her of Spenser's poem in 1591; or, further, to assume that the reference to "the thrice three Muses" may have been intended as a compliment to her and the Stanley family. We must never forget, however, that in these matters we are forced, from the very circumstances, to deal with probabilities and not with actual facts; and it must also be noted that Shakespeare's company is not stated to have played at Court on "the 26 of January," though performances are recorded on the 5th January and 22nd February 1595. (See Fleay, *Life and Work of Shakespeare*, 1866, pp. 126, 127.)

4. Another allusion is distinctly in favour of the autumn of 1594. The reference in I. ii. 77 and III. i. 31 to the lion frightening the duchess and the ladies, is not improbably a reminiscence of an incident which happened at the Scottish Court at the baptism of Prince Henry, the eldest son of James I., in August 1594. Malone was the first to remark on "the odd coincidence," as he calls it. He quotes a pamphlet which is reprinted in Somers's Tracts, ii. 179: "While the king and queen were at dinner a chariot was drawn in by 'a black-moore. This chariot should have been drawne in by a lyon, but because his presence might have brought some fears to the nearest, or that the sights of the lights and the torches might have commoved his tameness, it was thought meete that the Moor should supply that room.'"

Steevens, in his note to II. i. 15, refers to the following passage from the old anonymous comedy of *The Wisdom*

of Doctor Dodypoll, the earliest known edition of which is dated 1600:

> 'Twas I that led you through the painted meads,
> When the light fairies danc'd upon the flowers,
> Hanging on every leaf an orient pearl.

It is true that Nash, in his preface to Gabriel Harvey's *Hunt is Up*, 1596, mentions the name "doctor Dodypowle," but this is without any reference to the play, and the name Dodipoll had long previously been in use for a blockhead. H. Chichester Hart points out (*Athenæum*, 1888) that the name occurs in *Hickscorner*, 1552:

> What, Master Doctor Dotypoll,
> Cannot you preach well in a black boll
> Or dispute any divinity?

It seems to be represented by the modern slang word "dotty." So that we can deduce no argument as to the date from the reference by Steevens.

The arguments of Chalmers for assigning the date of the play to the year 1598 may be found set out at length in Furness's *New Variorum*, p. 248 *sqq.* I shall not attempt to introduce them here, as, in my opinion, they have no real weight, and are weak and inconclusive. The conjectures of Gerald Massey and of some of the German critics (Tieck, Elze, Kurz, and others), which attempt to fix an earlier or later date for the play, on the theory, amongst others, that the occasion of the performance was the marriage of Lord Essex with Lady Sidney in 1590, or that of Lord Southampton with Elizabeth Vernon in 1598—both secret marriages, by the way, and obnoxious to the Queen's displeasure—may also be found duly set

out in Furness, p. 248 *sqq.* In my opinion, they may be dismissed as not worth serious discussion.

A somewhat shrewd line of argument as to the date has been adopted by Aldis Wright in his Introduction to the Clarendon Press Edition, p. xi, where he says: "If we attempt to arrange the plays which Meres attributes to Shakespeare, so as to distribute them over the period from 1589 to 1598, we shall find two gaps, in either of which we might conjecturally place the Midsummer-Night's Dream. The interval from 1589 to 1591 is filled up by Love's Labour's Lost, the Two Gentlemen of Verona, Comedy of Errors, and Titus Andronicus. In 1593, 1594, are placed Richard the Second, Richard the Third, King John, and in these years appeared Venus and Adonis and Lucrece. The Merchant of Venice is assigned to 1596, and Henry the Fourth to 1597. Besides these there are the three Parts of Henry the Sixth, which Meres does not mention, but which, if Shakespeare's at all, must belong to the earlier part of this period, and 'Loue Labours Wonne,' whatever this may have been. On the whole, I am disposed to agree with Professor Dowden in regarding the Two Gentlemen of Verona as earlier than the Midsummer-Night's Dream, while I cannot think the latter was composed after the plays assigned above to 1593, 1594, and would therefore place it in the interval from 1591 to 1593, when perhaps Romeo and Juliet may have been begun." I see no reason whatever to think that the historical plays above mentioned, *i.e.* those assigned to 1593, 1594, were necessarily composed *after* the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*. On the contrary, I am strongly of opinion that these historical plays show clearly that Shakespeare was still more

or less—more, certainly, in *Richard the Third*—under the influence of Marlowe; and that in the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* we have the earliest, purest, and most original effort of his *own* genius, finding its own high level, and unswayed by the influence of any dramatic predecessor. It is the *dramatic* complement of the *poetic* efforts of 1593, 1594. Aldis Wright has, therefore, in my opinion, mistaken his "gap." The interval from 1594 to 1596 has, if we consider such evidence as has been previously adduced, every single argument of weight in its favour.

Further, the evidence of style and composition is unmistakeable, and goes to show that the place of the play must be amongst the early comedies, in all probability after *Love's Labour's Lost*, the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *The Errors*. We have its blank verse of a somewhat regular and monotonous kind. We have the symmetrical grouping of the characters, characteristic of all the early plays. We have the usual strained conceits, the antitheses, and other rhetorical devices of Shakespeare's early manner, not to speak of certain artificial devices of construction, indicating immature stage-craft, such as the device in the first Act of leaving Lysander and Hermia alone on the stage to arrange their flight from Athens. The play abounds with rhyme, even when this is not necessary for lyrical expression. The characters, too, with the notable exception of Bottom, are more or less sketches, and are far indeed from being living exponents of Shakespeare's knowledge of human nature. The Cowden Clarkes hereon well remark: "The internal evidence of the composition itself gives unmistakeable token of its having been written when the poet was in his flush of youthful manhood. The classicality of the principal personages, Theseus and Hippolyta; the

Grecian-named characters; the prevalence of rhyme; the grace and whimsicality of the fairy-folk; the rich warmth of colouring that pervades the poetic diction; the abundance of description, rather than of plot, action, and character-development, all mark the young dramatist." With regard to the date of composition, therefore, I think a fairly strong case has been made out for the autumn or winter of 1594–95; and in this date most prominent Shakespearean scholars agree: *e.g.* Malone, Knight, Collier, Dyce, Keightley, Halliwell, Marshall, Dowden, and Craig. We may be satisfied to leave it at that, until the unlikely event of some tangible piece of evidence arising which will tend to correct this assumption.[1]

It cannot be said that Shakespeare is indebted to any single source for the plot of his *Midsummer-Night's Dream*. Hints from many quarters of his reading, knowledge, and experience seem to have been taken and welded into one beautiful and harmonious poetic mass by the force of his fancy and imagination. Some hints he took from (*a*) Plutarch's *Lives*, and from (*b*) Chaucer's *Knightes Tale*; something from (*c*) the story of *Pyramus and Thisbe* in his favourite book, Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; perhaps a hint, perhaps not, from (*d*) Greene's

[1 Revision, as inferred on p. xxix, has been suggested to explain conflicting evidence of date, and any suspicious symptoms such as difference in style, which, when not due to difference in subject, might be thought to arise from inception in rawer and riper stages of Shakespeare's development. An interesting fact in favour of re-handling, perhaps in 1598, is urged by Professor J. Dover Wilson in the *New Cambridge Shakespeare*, namely, the occurrence in v. i. 1–84 of groups of lines inaccurately divided in the quarto, such lines also suggesting maturer powers. Without these groups, the passage is regular in metre and complete in sense, and it is thought that Shakespeare, adding to his original MS. at some later period, made his additions in the margin "in such space as could be found" leaving "a problem of line arrangement which the compositor was quite unable to solve." The close of the act also suggests revision, if correctly interpreted as pointing to a double ending of the play (as first by Fleay in his *Life and Work of Shakespeare*, 1886, and *Chronicle of the English Drama*, 1891) the one concluding with Oberon's song for a marriage followed by the S.D. *Exeunt*, the other with an epilogue by Puck. R. H. C.]

History of James VI.; mayhap a thought or two from (*e*) Spenser's *Faerie Queene*; something from (*f*) ballad, tale, and tradition regarding the fairy beings of English superstition and folk-lore; and possibly the hint of the "love-juice" from (*g*) Montemayor's *Diana* (1579).

(*a*) The essential passages in Plutarchs' *Lives* which supplied Shakespeare with the allusions in II. i. 68–80 will be found in the notes, p. 40.

(*b*) *The Knightes Tale* was probably the most famous of Chaucer's works, and the subject had been already dramatised, namely, by Richard Edwards in his *Palamon and Arcyte*, 1566. A *Palamon and Arcite* had also been acted at the Rose Theatre in September 1594. (See Fleay, *Life and Work of Shakespeare*, 1886.) But these plays are not extant. *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* resembles *The Knightes Tale* in little more than that the scene in both is laid at the court of Theseus. The characters are entirely different. "There is little," says Staunton, "at all in common between the two stories except the name of Theseus, the representative of which appears in Shakespeare simply as a prince who lived in times when the introduction of ethereal beings, such as Oberon, Titania, and Puck was in accordance with tradition and romance." In fact, Shakespeare, the dramatist, even at this early stage of his career, saw fit to reject as unsuitable for his play material which Chaucer, the poet, found entirely suitable for his tale. Such glimpses as Shakespeare may have obtained of Chaucer's characters or facts may be seen from the passages printed in Appendix III. His Palamon and Arcite, in their rivalry for the love of Emilie, may have suggested the pairs of Athenian lovers and their complicated rivalry in the play. It will not be forgotten, also, that the name of Philostrate, Theseus's "Master of the

Revels," is the name Arcite assumes in Chaucer's *Tale*, when he goes to Athens after his escape.

(*c*) The story of Pyramus and Thisbe is "as old as the hills and a great deal older"; but I think that for Shakespeare's special authority we need look no further than Golding's Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Book IV. p. 43, ed. 1567). The story as Golding has versified it will be found in Appendix IV.; together with *A New Sonet of Pyramus and Thisbe*, by I. Thomson, in Clement Robinson's *Handefull of Pleasant Delites*; and no doubt Shakespeare had read this ballad as well.

(*d*) To Greene's *Historie of James IV.*, written about 1590, Shakespeare is certainly not indebted in any particular that I can discover, hardly even for the name of Oberon. Its full title runs: *The Scottish Historie of James IV., slaine at Flodden—Intermixed with a pleasant Comedie, presented by Oboram (sic) King of Fayeries.* This "Historie" was printed in 1598. The story of Flodden Field apparently has nothing to do with the drama, the plot of which has no historical foundation; and, so far as I can discover, the "intermixture with the pleasant Comedie" consists only of a prelude or chorus in which Oberon and the "angry Scot" Bohan introduce the body of the play, and of dances by certain "antics," "jigs devised for the nonst" or "rounds of fairies," or "some pretty dances" between the Acts. What all this has to do with *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* one is at a loss to discover. Professor A. W. Ward, however, thinks that "the general idea of the machinery of Oberon and his fairy court was in all probability taken by Shakspere from Greene's Scottish History of James IV." (See his *English Dramatic Literature*, vol. ii. p. 85, new ed.) The reader may be left to form his own opinion.

(*e*) Shakespeare, I think it will be agreed, took nothing

from Spenser. Reference hereon may be made to the *Faerie Queene*, Book II. c. x. 631 *sqq.*

(*f*) "Shakespeare," says Keightley, in a well-known passage (*Fairy Mythology*, ii. 127, ed. 1833), "seems to have attempted a blending of the Elves of the village with the Fays of romance. His fairies agree with the former in their diminutive stature,—diminished, indeed, to dimensions inappreciable by village gossips,—in their fondness for dancing, their love of cleanliness and in their child-abstracting propensities. Like the Fays, they form a community, ruled over by the princely Oberon and the fair Titania. There is a court and chivalry; Oberon . . . like earthly monarchs, has his jester, 'the shrewd and knavish sprite, called Robin Goodfellow'" (II. i. 33).

Shakespeare may have gained some hints for his character of the fairy king for the purposes of this play from the old French courtly romance of *Huon of Burdeaux*, translated by Lord Berners, *circ.* 1540, on which a play, now lost, was founded, according to the record of that "thrifty but illiterate" manager, Henslowe, in his *Diary*, where the play appears as "*hewen of burdokes*," and as having been performed in "desembr" and "Janewary" 1593. The date of this is at any rate significant, as it must have preceded the composition of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream.* Keightley (*Fairy Mythology*, ii. 6 note) shows clearly that the name is identical with that of the dwarf Elberich (*i.e.* elf-king) in Wolfram von Eschenbach's ballad of Otnit in the *Heldenbuch.* It cannot be said, however, that there is more than an indirect resemblance between the Oberon of the old courtly romance and Shakespeare's fairy king. If Shakespeare took the name he took little else, save perhaps the references to Oberon's connec-

tion with the East. Mr. S. Lee, in his Introduction to *Duke Huon of Burdeaux* (Early Eng. Text Socy. Pub. Part I. p. 50), says: "The Oberon of the great poet's fairy-comedy, although he is set in a butterfly environment, still possesses some features very similar to those of the romantic fairy king. . . . The mediæval fairy dwells in the East; his kingdom is situated somewhere to the east of Jerusalem, in the far-reaching district that was known to mediæval writers under the generic name of India. Shakespeare's fairy is similarly a foreigner to the western world. He is totally unlike Puck, his lieutenant, 'that merry wanderer of the night' (II. i. 43), who springs from purely English superstition, and it is stated in the comedy that he has come to Greece 'from the farthest steep of India.' Titania, further, tells her husband how the mother of her page-boy gossiped at her side in their home 'in the spiced Indian air, by night' (II. i. 124). And it will be remembered that an Indian boy causes the jealousy of Oberon." And, in my opinion, one significant proof that Shakespeare had read the old romance appears from his mention of the "fearful wild-fowl." (See II. i. 232, of the griffin, and III. i. 33, of the lion, and the notes thereon.)

The name Titania can only be called the invention of Shakespeare in so far as he has applied it to the Queen of the Fairies. Its source is undoubtedly the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, which Shakespeare probably read, but more probably only referred to, in the original (see *Metamorphoses*, iii. 173, "dumque ibi perluitur solita Titania lympha"; where Titania is a name of Diana), as well as in his favourite book, the translation by Arthur Golding. "It must have struck him," says Baynes, *Shakespeare Studies* (p. 210, ed. 1894), "in reading the text of the *Metamor-*

phoses, as it is not to be found in the only translation which existed in his day. Golding, instead of transferring the name Titania, always translates it in the case of Diana by the phrase Titan's daughter. . . . Shakespeare could not, therefore, have been indebted to Golding for the happy selection. On the other hand, in the next translation of the *Metamorphoses* by Sandys, first published ten years after Shakespeare's death, Titania is freely used. . . . It is clear, therefore, I think, that Shakespeare not only studied the *Metamorphoses* in the original, but that he read the different stories with a quick and open eye for any name, incident, or allusion that might be available for use in his own dramatic labours." Keightley, to whom we are already indebted, thus explains the origin of the name (*Fairy Mythology*, ii. 127): "It was the belief of those days that the fairies were the same as the classic Nymphs, the attendants of Diana; 'that fourth kind of spiritis,' says King James, 'quhilk be the gentilis was called Diana, and her wandering Court, and amongs us called the *Phairie*.' The Fairy Queen was therefore the same as Diana, whom Ovid (*Metamorphoses*, iii. 173) styles Titania." But if Shakespeare gleaned the name from the *Metamorphoses*, he took little else. "His queen," says Chambers, "is a very different being from the classic Diana. She has no single characteristic of the goddess. She is an innocent, impulsive, childlike fay; she is the embodiment of feminine daintiness and delicacy; and all about her is imagined with an exquisite instinct for the elemental life of flower and insect and all the dainty and delicate things of nature."

The word Puck, as denoting "that shrewd and knavish sprite called Robin Goodfellow" (II. i. 33), is, strictly speak-

ing, an appellation and not a person, being merely an old word meaning devil ; and even in the play we find him saying, " as I am *an* honest Puck," and " Else *the* Puck a liar call " (v. i. 429 and 433). The name was known in England probably as early as the twelfth or thirteenth century. See the *Vision of Piers Ploughman*, 11345 (ed. Wright),

> Out of the *poukes* pondfold
> No maynprise may us fecche;

and the " Romance of Richard Cœur de Lion," 4236 (in Weber's *Metrical Romances*, vol. ii., " He is no man, he is a pouke " ; both extracts quoted in Wright's Introduction to the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, Clar. Press ed., p. xvi). The Icelandic *puki*, the Devonshire *pixy*, the Worcestershire *poake* (*poake-ledden*), the Dutch *spook*, are all variations of the same word.

Keightley apparently was of opinion that Shakespeare was the first to confound Puck with the English house-spirit, Robin Goodfellow; " but it is evident," says Knight, " that in popular belief the same mischief-loving qualities which belong to Puck were attributed to Robin Goodfellow long before the time of Shakespeare." In my opinion it is nearer the mark to say, not that he was the first to confound the two, but that he was the first to crystallise the floating popular belief, and to stamp it on English poetry for all time.

Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, first published in 1584, ought, perhaps, apart from popular tradition at least, to be considered as Shakespeare's chief source of information as to Robin Goodfellow's qualities. Scot, speaking of the birth of Merlin, says (4 Booke, c. x. p. 67, ed. Nicholson): " I hope you understand that they

affirme and saie, that *Incubus* is a spirit; and I trust you know that a spirit hath no flesh nor bones, &c.; and that he neither dooth eate nor drinke. In deede your grandames maides were woont to set a boll of milke before him and his cousine Robin good-fellow, for grinding of malt or mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight; and you haue also heard that he would chafe exceedingly, if the maid or good-wife of the house, hauing compassion of his nakedness, laid anie clothes for him, beesides his messe of white bread and milke, which was his standing fee. For in that case he saith: 'What have we here? Hemton hamten, here will I neuer more tread nor stampen.'" Again, Scot says (7 Booke, c. xv. p. 122): "It is a common saieng; A lion feareth no bugs. But in our childhood our mothers maids haue so terrified vs with an ouglie divell hauing hornes on his head, fier in his mouth . . . eies like a bason, fanges like a dog, clawes like a beare, a skin like a Niger, and a voice roring like a lion, whereby we start and are afraid when we heare one crie Bough: and they have so fraied us with bull beggers, spirits, witches, urchens, elves, hags, fairies, satyrs, pans, faunes, sylens, kit with the cansticke, tritons, centaurs, dwarfes, giants, imps, calcars, conjurors, nymphes, changlings, *Incubus*, Robin good-fellowe, the spoorne, the mare, the man in the Oke, the hell waine, the fierdrake, the puckle, Tom thombe, hobgoblin, Tom tumbler, boneles, and such other bugs, that we are afraid of our owne shadowes; in so much as some never feare the divell, but in a darke night; and then a polled sheepe is a perillous beast, and manie times is taken for our fathers soule, speciallie in a churchyard, where a right hardie man heretofore scant durst passe by night, but his haire

would stand upright." So also (7 Booke, c. ii. p. 105): "And know you this by the waie, that heretofore Robin goodfellow and Hob gobblin were as terrible, and also as credible to the people, as hags and witches be now; and in time to come, a witch will be as much derided and contemned, and as plainlie perceived, as the illusion and knaverie of Robin goodfellow. And in truth, they that mainteine walking spirits, with their transformation, &c., have no reason to denie Robin goodfellow, upon whom there hath gone as manie and as credible tales, as upon witches; saving that it hath not pleased the translators of the Bible to call spirits by the name of Robin goodfellow, as they have termed divinors, soothsaiers, poisoners, and couseners by the name of witches."

Halliwell, in his *Memoranda on The Midsummer-Night's Dream*, 1879, notes that Tarlton, in his *Newes out of Purgatorie*, 1589, says of Robin Goodfellow that he was "famozed in everie old wives chronicle, for his mad merrye prankes"; and further notes, "Nash, in his *Terrors of the Night*, 1594, observes that the Robin Goodfellowes, elfes, fairies, hobgoblins of our latter age, did most of their merry pranks in the night; then ground they malt, and had hempen shirts for their labours, daunst in greene meadows, pincht maids in their sleep that swept not their houses cleane, and led poor travellers out of their way notoriously."

(*g*) Shakespeare was apparently the first to connect with fairy-lore the juice with which Oberon ordered Puck to anoint the eyes of Titania and the Athenian lovers. He *may* have got the suggestion from the *Diana* of Montemayor, since the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, a play which

undoubtedly preceded *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, shows him to have been acquainted with it. "I have toiled," says Furness (p. 283), "through the four hundred and ninety-six weary, dreary falsetto folio pages of Montemayor's *Diana* without finding any conceivable suggestion for the fairy story other than that of the love-juice" (III. ii. 37). Yong's English translation of the *Diana* was not published till 1598; but according to the preface it was written sixteen years before; and Shakespeare may therefore have seen it in MS., or, as is much more probable, have gathered the incident indirectly from another quarter. In the tale a charm is used to transfer the affections of one shepherd "illimitably in love" from one object to another, just as the affections of Lysander and Demetrius are transferred in the play. But surely *we* need not be driven to gather our simples from the *Diana*. The idea of a love philtre or distillation from herbs or flowers for this purpose is surely common enough in classical and mediæval literature.

By an easy transition we pass from the "love-juice" to the well-known passage in the second Act of the play in which Shakespeare introduces its source, "the little western flower."

This famous passage, the speech of Oberon to Puck (II. i. 148–168), has given rise to much speculation and conjecture; and many attempts have been made to interpret it as an allegory. Rowe apparently was the first to point out that some kind of allegory was intended; and, according to him, it amounted to no more than a graceful compliment to Queen Elizabeth. He says (*Life*, p. 8): "Queen Elizabeth had several of the plays acted before her, and without doubt gave him many gracious marks of her

favour. It is that maiden Princess, plainly, whom he intends by a 'fair vestal throned by the west'; and that whole passage is a compliment very properly brought in and very handsomely apply'd to her."

Warburton's interpretation takes the point of view of a political allegory. "By the vestal," he says, "every one knows is meant Queen Elizabeth. It is very natural and reasonable then to think that the Mermaid stands for some eminent person of her time . . . of whom it had been inconvenient for the author to speak openly, either in praise or dispraise. All this agrees with Mary Queen of Scots and no other. Queen Elizabeth could not bear to hear her commended; and her successor would not forgive her satirist. . . . She is called a *Mermaid*—(1) to denote her reign over a kingdom situate in the sea, and (2) her beauty and intemperate lust, 'ut turpiter atrum Desinat in piscem mulier formosa supernè,' for as Elizabeth, for her chastity, is called a *Vestal*, this unfortunate lady, on a contrary account, is called a *Mermaid*. . . . 'On a dolphin's back' evidently marks out that distinguishing circumstance of Mary's fortune, her marriage with the Dauphin of France, son of Henry II. 'Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath' alludes to her great abilities of genius and learning which rendered her the most accomplished Princess of her age. . . . 'That the rude sea grew civil at her song': By rude sea is meant Scotland encircled with the ocean; which rose up in arms against the Regent, while she was in France. But her return home presently quieted these disorders. . . . 'And certain stars shot madly from their spheres': by which he meant the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, who fell in her quarrel; and principally the great

Duke of Norfolk, whose projected marriage with her was attended with such fatal consequences."

Warburton's allegorical interpretation seems to have been accepted by Johnson and Capell; while, on the other hand, Steevens could not dissemble his doubts concerning it. "Is it probable," he asks, "that Shakespeare (who understood his own political as well as poetical interest) should have ventured such a panegyric on this ill-fated Princess, during the reign of her rival Elizabeth? If it was unintelligible to his audience, it was thrown away; if obvious, there was a danger of offence to her majesty."

Ritson was excessively severe in his comments on what he calls Warburton's "chimerical allegory of which the poet himself had no idea, and which the commentator, to whose creative fancy it owes its existence, seems to have very justly characterised in telling us it is 'out of nature'; that is, as I conceive, perfectly groundless and unnatural."

Boaden (*On the Sonnets*, 1837, p. 18) thought it not at all improbable that the groundwork of Oberon's description was the pageant of "*The Princelie Pleasures at Kenilworth Castle*," which the Earl of Leicester devised for the Queen's entertainment in 1575; and that Shakespeare, who was then eleven years of age, might have been a spectator. "His description," says Boaden, "is exactly such as, after 17" [rather 19] "years had elapsed, a reminiscence would suggest to a mind highly poetical."

The Rev. N. J. Halpin in his *Oberon's Vision*, 1843, printed by the Shakespeare Society, follows Boaden in identifying the scene of Oberon's vision with that of the "Princelie Pleasures," and pushes the allegory, if allegory there be, to the utmost limit of refinement, and with the

utmost fulness of detail. With regard to the princely pleasures, Halpin relies for his interpretation on the collation of three contemporary authorities which the curious reader may further consult at his pleasure, namely, Laneham's *Letter: whearin Part of the Entertainment untoo the Queenz Majesty, at Killingworth Castle in Warwick Sheer, in this Soommerz Progrest 1575, iz signified*; Gascoigne's *Princely Pleasures, with the Masque intended to have been presented before Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle*; and Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire.* Halpin considers that these authorities afford sufficient evidence "to identify the time and place of Oberon's Vision with the Princely Pleasures of Kenilworth"; and comparing "the poetical allegory (in juxtaposition) with a simple paraphrase of the literal meaning which has been assigned to it," he finds—putting it shortly—that the "promontory" on which Oberon sat was a rising ground or *bray*—probably "the Brayz" mentioned by Laneham as "linking a fair park with the Castle on the South"—that "Cupid all armed flying between the cold moon and the earth" refers to the Earl of Leicester, in the magnificence of his preparations for storming the heart of his royal mistress, wavering in his passion between (Cynthia or) Queen Elizabeth and (Tellus or) the Lady Douglas, Countess of Sheffield. The "certain aim at the fair vestal throned by the west" is the well-directed effort for the hand of Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen. The quenching of the fiery shaft means that Leicester's desperate venture was lost in the pride, prudery, and jealousy of power which invariably swayed the tide of Elizabeth's passions; and the Virgin Queen departed from Kenilworth Castle

unshackled with a matrimonial engagement, and as heart-whole as ever. The remainder of the allegory he construes as follows: the "little western flower" is Lettice, the wife of Walter, Earl of Essex, formerly pure and innocent, but afterwards inflamed with a criminal passion for Leicester, and the subject of shame and obloquy.

This interpretation of Halpin's is certainly characterised by the most remarkable skill and ingenuity; but one great difficulty in accepting it is the necessity for recognising the blending of allegory and fact, to which latter we immediately descend on hearing Oberon's command, "Fetch me that flower": unless, indeed, we are to imagine some subtle Ovidian metamorphosis of the Countess Lettice into a veritable little flower of the west. This is admirably expressed in the quotation which follows.

Hunter (*New Illustrations*, 1845, i. 291) adheres to the allegorical interpretation of Warburton, at least as to the Mermaid representing the Queen of Scots; and he further remarks: "At the very time when at the sea maid's music certain stars shot from their spheres, the strong dart aimed by Cupid against Elizabeth fell innocuous; and she passed on 'In maiden meditation fancy-free.' The allegory ends here, according to all just rule, when the flower is introduced. This flower was a real flower, about to perform a conspicuous part in the drama, and the allegory is written expressly to give a dignity to the flower; it is the splendour of preparation intended to fix attention on the flower, whose peculiar virtues were to be the means of effecting some of the most important purposes of the drama. The passage resembles, in this respect, one a little before, in which there is an interest given to

the little henchman by the recital of the gambols of Titania with his mother on the sea-shore of India, and the interest thrown around Othello's handkerchief. The allegory has been complete, and has fulfilled its purpose when we come to the flower, which, in the hands of the poet, undergoes a beautiful metamorphose, and has now acquired all the interest which it was desirable to give it, and poetically and dramatically necessary, considering the very important part which was afterwards to be performed by it."

Except, perhaps, in respect of the one distinct creation —Bottom—there is no great effort on Shakespeare's part at the delineation of "character" in this play. The types of the "human mortals" are already familiar to us in the plays antecedent to the *Dream*; and Theseus, so far from being Shakespeare's "early ideal of a heroic warrior and man of action" (Dowden), is, in my opinion, drawn, and purposely drawn, in the barest outline—just sufficient to furnish a frame for the picture in which the fairies are the protagonists.

A remarkable article in the *Edinburgh Review* for April 1848, referring to the old division of the characters into three parties or groups, namely, the heroes (including the lovers), the fairies, and the artisans, advances the hypothesis that the fairies are the primary conception of the piece, and their action the main or dominant action. The article so fully expresses my own views on the point, that I am induced to quote it at some length. "The first of these" [*i.e.* parties or groups] "consists of the heroes, Theseus and his very unhistorical court. These are themselves fanciful and unsubstantial; not, indeed, creatures of the

elements, yet scarcely the men and women of flesh and blood with whom Shakespeare has elsewhere peopled his living stage. We cannot but suspect there is a meaning in their mythological origin. Shakespeare has neither drawn them from history, his resource when he wished to paint the broader realities of life, nor from the lights and shadows, the gay gallantry and devoted love, of the Italian novel. They are apparently selected purely for their want of association. Their humanity is of the most delicately refined order; their perplexities the turbulence of still life. Moreover, the components of the group, the pairs of Athenian lovers, seem only to be so distributed in order to be confused. There are no distinctive features in their members. Lysander differs in nothing from Demetrius, Helena in nothing but height from Hermia. Finally, they speak a great deal of poetry, and poetry more exquisite never dropped from human pen; but it is purely objective, and not in the slightest degree modified by the character of the particular speaker. Turn we now to the second group. If the first were as far as possible removed from everyday experience, these are types of a class ever ready to our hand. They are of the earth, earthy. Bottom sat at a Stratford loom, Starveling on a Stratford tailoring-board; between them they perhaps made the doublet which captivated the eyes of Richard Hathaway's daughter, or the hose that were torn in the park of the Lucys. If the former personages were all of one coinage, the characters of the latter are stamped with curious marks of difference. The πολυπραγμοσύνη of Bottom, the discretion of Snug, the fickleness of Starveling are (as Hazlitt has shown) minutely and fancifully dis-

criminated. And most strongly, too, is the homely idiomatic prose of their dialogue contrasted with the blinding brilliancy of those rhymed verses which speak the eternal language of love by the mouths of the Athenian ladies and their lovers. In short, they are the very counterpart of the former group; and it is this that we wish to establish: an intentional antagonism between the two. They seem to us, in their respective delicacy and coarseness, to mark the two extreme phases of life, the highest and the lowest, as presented to the imaginative faculty; the lowest, as it may be seen by experience,—the highest, as it may be conceived of in dreams.

"In Act II. we are presented for the first time with a new creation, that of the Fairies. Henceforward, the first two actions, so remarkably separated in Act I., are gradually interwoven with the third, though nowhere with each other. In the beings of whom this third group is composed, nothing is so characteristic as the humanity of their motives and passions — humanity modified by the peculiarities of the fairy race — such as might be expected in a duodecimo edition of mankind. We find working in them splenetic jealousy, love, hatred, revenge, all the passions of men,—the littlenesses of soul brought out by each, being, as we think, designedly exaggerated. Their movements, too, are eminently significant of a vigorous dramatic action, the story being almost epical in form,—the tale of the μῆνις Ὠβερῶνος; of which, as it gradually and uniformally advances, we are enabled to trace in the play the origin, development, and consequences. The hypothesis, then, which we wish to put forward is, that the *fairies* are the primary conception of the piece, and

their action the main action; that Shakespeare wished to represent this fanciful creation in contact with two strongly marked extremes of human nature; the instruments by which they influence them being, aptly enough, in one case the ass's head, in the other the 'little western flower.'

"It is necessary to this idea that the two actions of the heroes and the artisans should be considered completely subordinate, and their separate relations among themselves as not having been created relatively to the whole piece, but principally to the intended action of the fairies upon them. We shall then have the singular arrangement of the first Act purposely designed to exhibit successively the characteristics of the two groups in marked opposition, before exposing them to the influence of the fairies. Finally, the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe is the ingenious machinery by which, after the stage has ceased to be occupied by the fairy action, these two otherwise independent groups are wrought together and amalgamated.

"Some difficulty may yet present itself as to the form of the piece, furnished as it were with a preface and supplement; but we think this can be satisfactorily accounted for. . . . The *Midsummer-Night's Dream* is a dream on the night of Midsummer Day; a night sanctified to the operations of fairies, as Hallowe'en was to those of witches. The play is distributed into three distinguishable portions, those included in Act I.—in Acts II., III., and the first scene of Act IV.—and in the last scene of Act IV. together with Act V. The second, and by far the most important division, comprehends all the transactions of the Mid-

summer Night;—its action is carefully restricted to the duration of these twelve witching hours (Oberon having, as he says, to perform all before 'the first cock crow'), while those of the first and third portions take place at distances of two days and one day respectively. Here, then, we have a stringent reason for Shakespeare's arrangement. He could not introduce us to the two subordinate groups, show us their isolated relations, and in the end interweave them by a consistent process, without separating them, when operating *per se*, from the main action. He could, for instance, neither account for the appearance of the lovers in the wood without a previous exposition of their difficulties, and of the agreement to fly on the 'morrow deep midnight,' nor for that of the stage-struck artisans, without some intimation of the intention to act a play, which made a rehearsal necessary. He could not follow his usual practice of developing together the relations and position of all his characters, because the limitation to twelve hours would not admit it—and out of these twelve hours he could not remove the fairy action. So that the first and last sections of the drama, in which the main action does not proceed and only the subordinate groups appear, have nothing to do with the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, but are merely exegetical of it.

"There are some minor indications of the truth of our theory. The very title, for instance, solely applicable as it is to that part of the drama in which the fairies appear, seems not a little significant. . . . Nor is the distribution of blank and rhymed verse unobservable. . . . We have occasionally fancied that, where the objectively poetical element prevails, the dialogue is mostly written in rhyme;

where the dramatic, in the ordinary blank verse of Shakespeare. Both heroes and fairies speak in blank and rhymed verse, but not indifferently. The relations of the subordinate group are generally, though not invariably, conveyed through the imaginative rhymed lines, while the fairies—the *dramatic* personages—rarely quit the vigorous versification we are so well accustomed to.

"We are desirous that the fairies should assume in this play a position commensurate with the influence they must always exercise over English literature. Great as is the importance of combined purity and beauty in a national mythology, the indirect value is even greater. We have escaped much, as well as gained much, if our imagination has conversed with a more delicate creation than the sensuous divinities of Greece or the vulgar spectres of the Walpurgis-Nacht. But whether the *entente cordiale* between England and Fairy-land be for good or for evil, we must at any rate acknowledge that the connection virtually began on that very Midsummer Night which witnessed the quarrel between Oberon and Titania."

Critical and "æsthetic" appreciations of the play have been numerous, and, on the whole, satisfactory; and therefore I do not propose to attempt to add anything in this behalf which might be styled "original," but rather to quote, as briefly as possible, some of the more distinguished passages from well-known critics of the nineteenth century. Hazlitt, in his *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*, 1817, says: "Puck is the leader of the fairy band. He is the Ariel of the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*; and yet as unlike as can be to the Ariel of *The Tempest*. No other poet could have made two such different characters out of the

same fanciful materials and situations. Ariel is a minister of retribution, who is touched with a sense of pity at the woes he inflicts. Puck is a madcap sprite, full of wantonness and mischief, who laughs at those whom he misleads —'Lord, what fools these mortals be!' Ariel cleaves the air, and executes his mission with the zeal of a winged messenger; Puck is borne along on his fairy errand like the light and glimmering gossamer before the breeze. He is, indeed, a most epicurean little gentleman, dealing in quaint devices, and faring in dainty delights. Prospero and his world of spirits are a set of moralists; but with Oberon and his fairies we are launched at once into the empire of the butterflies. How beautifully is this race of beings contrasted with the men and women actors in the scene, by a single epithet which Titania gives to the latter, 'the human mortals'!" And again: "In the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* alone we should imagine there is more sweetness and beauty of description than in the whole range of French poetry put together. What we mean is this, that we will produce out of that single play ten passages, to which we do not think any ten passages in the works of the French poets can be opposed, displaying equal fancy and imagery. Shall we mention the remonstrance of Helena to Hermia, or Titania's description of her fairy train, or her disputes with Oberon about the Indian boy, or Puck's account of himself and his employments, or the Fairy Queen's exhortation to the elves to pay due attendance upon her favourite, Bottom; or Hippolyta's description of a chase, or Theseus's answer? The two last are as heroical and spirited as the others are full of luscious tenderness. The reading of this play is like wandering in a

grove by moonlight; the descriptions breathe a sweetness like odours thrown upon beds of flowers."

Hallam, in his *Literature of Europe*, 1839, (vol. ii. p. 387), remarks: "This beautiful play evidently belongs to the earlier period of Shakespeare's genius; poetical as we account it, more than dramatic, yet rather so, because the indescribable profusion of imaginative poetry in this play overpowers our senses till we can hardly observe anything else, than from any deficiency of dramatic excellence. For in reality the structure of this fable, consisting as it does of three, if not four actions, very distinct in their subjects and personages, yet wrought into each other without effort or confusion, displays the skill, or rather instinctive felicity, of Shakespeare, as much as in any play he has written. . . . The *Midsummer-Night's Dream* is, I believe, altogether original in one of the most beautiful conceptions that ever visited the mind of a poet, the fairy machinery. A few before him had dealt in a vulgar and clumsy manner with popular superstition; but the sportive, beneficent, invisible population of the air and earth, long since established in the creed of childhood and of those simple as children, had never for a moment been blended with 'human mortals' among the personages of the drama. . . . The language of *Midsummer-Night's Dream* is equally novel with the machinery. It sparkles in perpetual brightness with all the hues of the rainbow; yet there is nothing overcharged or affectedly ornamented. Perhaps no play of Shakespeare has fewer blemishes, or is from beginning to end in so perfect keeping; none in which so few lines could be erased, or so few expressions blamed. His own peculiar idiom, the dress of his mind, which began to be discernible

in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, is more frequently manifested in the present play. The expression is seldom obscure, but it is never in poetry, and hardly in prose, the expression of other dramatists, and far less of the people."

Knight, in his *Supplementary Notice*, 1840, says: "We can conceive that with scarcely what can be called a model before him, Shakespeare's early dramatic attempts must have been a series of experiments to establish a standard by which he could regulate what he addressed to a mixed audience. The plays of his middle and mature life, with scarcely an exception, are acting plays; and they are so, not from the absence of the higher poetry, but from the predominance of character and passion in association with it. But even in those plays which call for a considerable exercise of the unassisted imaginative faculty in an audience, such as *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, where the passions are not powerfully roused and the senses are not held enchained by the interests of the plot, he is still essentially dramatic. . . . To offer an analysis of this subtle and ethereal drama would, we believe, be as unsatisfactory as the attempts to associate it with the realities of the stage. With scarcely an exception, the proper understanding of the other plays of Shakespeare may be assisted by connecting the apparently separate parts of the action, and by developing and reconciling what seems obscure and anomalous in the features of the characters. But to follow out the caprices and illusions of the loves of Demetrius and Lysander, of Helena and Hermia; to reduce to prosaic description the consequence of the jealousies of Oberon and Titania; to trace the Fairy Queen under the most fantastic of deceptions, . . . and finally to

go along with the scene till the illusions disappear, . . . such an attempt as this would be worse than unreverential criticism."

De Quincey, in his biography of Shakespeare (*Works*, vol. xv. p. 1, edition of 1863), says: "In the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, again, we have the old traditional fairy, a lovely mode of preternatural life, remodified by Shakespeare's eternal talisman. Oberon and Titania remind us at first glance of Ariel; they approach, but how far they recede: they are like—'like, but oh, how different!' And in no other exhibition of this dreamy population of the moonlight forests and forest-lawns are the circumstantial proprieties of fairy life so exquisitely imagined, sustained, or expressed. The dialogue between Oberon and Titania is, of itself, and taken separately from its connection, one of the most delightful poetic scenes that literature affords."

F. J. Furnivall, in his *Introduction to the "Leopold" Shakspere*, 1877, says: "Here at length we have Shakspere's genius in the full glow of fancy and delightful fun. The play is an enormous advance on what has gone before. But it is a poem, a dream, rather than a play; its freakish fancy of fairy-land fitting it for the choicest chamber of the student's brain, while its second part, the broadest farce, is just the thing for the public stage. . . . And certainly anything must be possible to the man who could in one work range from the height of Titania to the depth of Bottom. . . . Though the story is Greek, yet the play is full of English life. It is Stratford which has given Shakspere the picture of the sweet country schoolgirls working at one flower, warbling one song, growing together like a double cherry, seeming parted, but yet a union in

partition. It is Stratford that has given him the picture of the hounds with 'ears that sweep away the morning dew.' It is Stratford that has given him his outdoor woodland life, his clowns' play, and the clowns themselves, Bottom, with his inimitable conceit, and his fellows, Snug and Quince, etc. It is Stratford that has given him all Puck's fairy-lore, the cowslip's tale, the red-hipt bumble-bee, Oberon's bank, the pansy love-in-idleness, and all the lovely imagery of the play. But wonderful as is the mixture of delicate and aërial fancy with the coarsest and broadest comedy, clearly as it evidences the coming of a new being on this earth to whom anything is possible, it is yet clear that the play is quite young. The undignified quarrelling of the ladies, Hermia with her 'painted May-pole,' her threat to scratch Helena's eyes,—Helena with her retorts, 'She was a vixen when she went to school,' etc.,—the comical comparison of the moon tumbling through the earth (III. ii. 52), incongruously put into an accusation of murder, the descent to bathos in Shakspere's passage about his own art, from 'the poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling' to 'how easy is a bush supposed a bear,' would have been impossible to Shakspere in his later developement."

"*A Midsummer-Night's Dream*," says Professor Dowden (*Primer*, p. 70), "is a strange and beautiful web, woven delicately by a youthful poet's fancy. What is perhaps most remarkable about the play is the harmonious blending in it of widely different elements. It is as if threads of silken splendour were run together in its texture with a yarn of hempen homespun, and both these with lines of dewy gossamer and filaments drawn from the moonbeams.

. . . As the two extremes of exquisite delicacy, of dainty elegance, and, on the other hand, of thick-witted grossness and clumsiness, stand the fairy tribe and the group of Athenian handicraftsmen. The world of the poet's dream includes the two—a Titania, and a Bottom the weaver—and can bring them into grotesque conjunction. No such fairy poetry existed anywhere in English literature before Shakspere. The tiny elves, to whom a cowslip is tall, for whom the third part of a minute is an important division of time, have a miniature perfection which is charming. They delight in all beautiful and dainty things, and war with things that creep and things that fly, if they be uncomely; their lives are gay with fine frolic and delicate revelry. Puck, the jester of Fairyland, stands apart from the rest, the recognisable 'lob of spirits,' a rough 'fawn-faced, shock-pated little fellow, a very Shetlander among the gossamer-winged, dainty-limbed shapes around him.'"

These standard "appreciations" may be most fitly wound up by the eloquent remarks of Swinburne, in his "*Three Stages of Shakespeare*," in the *Fortnightly Review* for January 1876: "But in the final poem which concludes and crowns the first epoch of Shakespeare's work, the special graces and peculiar glories of each that went before are gathered together as in one garland 'of every hue and every scent.' The young genius of the master of all poets finds its consummation in the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*. The blank verse is as full, sweet, and strong as the best of Biron's or Romeo's; the rhymed verse as clear, pure, and true as the simplest and truest melody of *Venus and Adonis* or the *Comedy of Errors*. But here each kind of excellence is equal throughout; there are here no purple patches on a

gown of serge, but one seamless and imperial robe of a single dye. Of the lyric and prosaic part, the counterchange of loves and laughters, of fancy fine as air, and imagination high as heaven, what need can there be for any one to shame himself by the helpless attempt to say some word not utterly unworthy?"

Mr. Morton Luce, the editor of *The Tempest* in the Arden Shakespeare, 1902, dealing with the characteristics of that play as an autobiography of Shakespeare, has some admirable remarks in his comparison of the two plays (pp. li–lxx). Therein he points out that "three plays stand out from the rest in respect of autobiographical interest and suggestion: they are *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, and *The Tempest*; they reveal their author at the outset, the middle, and the close of his career." Among points of similarity he places "the intimate acquaintance with nature, the freshness, spontaneity, and fidelity of its literary presentment"—a faculty possessed, as he points out, by no other poet of the time. "Next to this, the freshness, profusion, and freedom of metaphorical expression, of imagery, of figurative language generally." The reader is best referred to the whole of these interesting and thoughtful passages on Shakespeare's literary and artistic development.

Another interesting discussion on certain alleged points of resemblance between *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* and *Titus Andronicus* appears in Mr. Bellyse Baildon's edition of the latter play in the Arden Shakespeare, 1904 (Introduction, p. lxvi *sqq.*). He instances the despotic claims of the fathers in both plays, the wood and its loneliness, the hunting episode, and the ducal marriage, together with the

leading ideas in the plot, *e.g.* the marrying a captive queen by Theseus and Saturninus, and the changing of brides in the one and the criss-cross love-making in the other, and the use in both plays of the Pyramus and Thisbe legend. Yet he is also fain to confess that the two plays afford more contrast than resemblance. To me it seems that these points of resemblance and contrast are more fanciful than real; and I certainly do not agree with him in his opinion that *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* was in all probability written a year or two after *Titus Andronicus*. A period of five or six years, is, I think, much more probable; and Mr. Baildon's own description of the points of contrast between the two plays (p. lxvii *sqq.*) seems to me to warrant this belief.

For the sake of general convenience, all references to plays of Shakespeare are to the Act, scene, and line of the *Globe* edition. It is a matter of some regret that in the numbering of the lines in parts of this play, notably in the prose passages, it has not been found convenient to adhere to the numeration of the *Globe* edition.

I have made it a point, so far as was possible to carry it out, of acknowledging all my sources of assistance, even in the case of the older editors. I am indebted for considerable help to Dr. H. H. Furness's *New Variorum* edition, rather as a collection or indication of notes and excursuses than for any original remarks of that worthy and industrious editor; and also in a similar way to the *Cambridge Shakespeare* for its critical notes, even for the hopeless rubbish which is therein enshrined—enshrined, it seems to me, as a solemn warning of what is to be avoided in textual criticism. I am indebted to Mr. P. A. Daniel for

an interesting note on the fairy "orbs" or circles referred to in II. i. 9, which will be found in Appendix II. Finally, I have the greatest possible pleasure in expressing my thanks to Mr. W. J. Craig, the general editor of the Arden Shakespeare, for his unwearied diligence and courtesy in placing at my service many selections from his great storehouse of notes in all departments of Elizabethan literature. Wherever it was found possible to make use of these, they have been acknowledged in their places in the notes.

A word of thanks is also due to the printers for the careful and generally accurate manner in which they have executed their necessary, though, I fear, not always appreciated task.

A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ[1]

THESEUS, *Duke of Athens.*
EGEUS, *Father to Hermia.*
LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, } *in love with Hermia.*
PHILOSTRATE, *Master of the Revels to Theseus.*
QUINCE, *a Carpenter.*
SNUG, *a Joiner.*
BOTTOM, *a Weaver.*
FLUTE, *a Bellows-mender*
SNOUT, *a Tinker.*
STARVELING, *a Tailor.*

HIPPOLYTA, *Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.*
HERMIA, *daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.*
HELENA, *in love with Demetrius.*
OBERON, *King of the Fairies.*
TITANIA, *Queen of the Fairies.*
PUCK, *or* ROBIN GOOD-FELLOW, *a Fairy.*
PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTE, MUSTARD-SEED, } *Fairies.*

Other Fairies attending their King and Queen. Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

SCENE: Athens, and a Wood near it.

[1] First given by Rowe.

A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

ACT I

SCENE I.—*Athens. The Palace of Theseus.*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, *and Attendants.*

The. Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon: but O, methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes! she lingers my desires,
Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a young man's revenue.

Scene I. Athens . . .] The Duke's Palace in Athens Theobald. Enter . . .] Enter Theseus, Hippolita, with others Qq, Ff. 4. *wanes*] *waves* Q 1.

Scene I. No division into acts or scenes is marked in the Quartos; the Folios mark the division into acts only. Capell's division into scenes is that which is usually followed.

1. *Hippolyta*] See Introduction. "Source of the Plot."

4. *lingers*] the active or transitive use. Cf. I. i. 6, "withering out"; II. i. 67, "versing love"; II. i. 112, "childing autumn"; *Richard II.* II. ii. 72:

"Who gently would dissolve the bands of life,
Which false hope lingers in extremity."

6. *withering out*] Steevens compares Chapman's *Iliad*, iv. 528, "And there the goodly plant lies *withering out* his grace." Whalley, *Enquiry into the Learning of Shakespeare* (1748), quoted by Malone, compares Horace, *Epist.* I. i. 21:

"ut piger annus
Pupillis, quos dura premit custodia matrum;
Sic mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora."

Cf. also *Merry Wives*, I. i. 284, "I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead."

Hip. Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

The. Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth;
Turn melancholy forth to funerals;

7. *night*] Q 1; *nights* Q 2, Ff. 8. *nights*] Q 1, Ff; *daies* Q 2. 10. *New bent*] Rowe; *Now bent* Qq, Ff; *night*] *height* Daniel conj.

10. *New bent*] Rowe's admirable emendation for the "Now bent" of the Qq, Ff. Combinations in "new" are very numerous in Shakespeare. As to the difficulties connected with the duration of the action and the confusion as to the moon's age, see the Introduction.

11. *solemnities*] Cf. IV. i. 187, "We'll hold a feast in great solemnity"; the idea referring perhaps rather to the religious, formal, or ceremonious celebration of Theseus's nuptials than to mere festivity, though no doubt Shakespeare intended it to be general. Shakespeare's use of the word is, as Craig suggests, probably due to his reading of Chaucer, who uses the word in the sense of pomp, outward show, ceremony. See the *Knightes Tale*, 10, *C. T.*, 868 (Skeat):

> "And weddede the queene Ipolita,
> And broghte hir hoom with him in his contree,
> With muchel glorie and greet solempnitee";

and *Merchantes Tale*, 1709, "Thus been they wedded with solempnitee." Cotgrave has Solennité: "a solemnitie or solemne feast."

11. *Philostrate*] a trisyllable, as in v.i.38, where the Qq give "Philostrate" instead of "Egeus," owing, no doubt, to the parts being doubled by the same actor. Philostrate, as we have seen, is the name assumed by Arcite in the *Knightes Tale*, 1428 (ed. Pollard): "And Philostrate he sayde that he highte."

13. *pert*] lively, alert; full of animal spirits (Craig). Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 272, "This pert Biron was out of countenance quite." The word is now somewhat degraded in meaning. Cotgrave has Godinet: "prettie, dapper, feat, peart"; and Godinette: "a pretty peart lass." Skeat, *Dict. s.v.*, shows that the Mid. Eng. "pert" had two sources and two meanings, the latter running somewhat into each other. 1. In some cases "pert" is a corruption of "apert," Fr. *apert*, open, evident, from the Lat. *apertus*; and "pertly" is used for "openly" or "evidently." 2. In the sense of "proud," "impertinent," *e.g.* "she was proud and peert," Chaucer, *C. T.*, 3950 (*Reeve's Tale*). The equivalent form, "perk," is older. Cf. "Perke as a peacock," Spenser, *Shep. Kal.*, Feb. 8. As a verb, the latter means to make smart or trim, "to be perked up in a glistering grief," *i.e.* dressed up, *Henry VIII.* II. iii. 21. The word, as Furness remarks, is still common in New England, and is there used exactly in the Shakespearian sense, and is pronounced as spelled in the Qq "peart," *i.e.* "peert."

The pale companion is not for our pomp. 15

[*Exit Philostrate.*

Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And won thy love, doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.

Enter EGEUS, HERMIA, LYSANDER, *and* DEMETRIUS.

Ege. Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke! 20

The. Thanks, good Egeus: what 's the news with thee?

Ege. Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.

15. [Exit Phil.] Theobald. 19. *revelling*] *revelry* T. White conj. Enter . . .] Enter Egeus and his daughter Hermia, and Lysander and Helena, and Demetrius Q 1; Enter . . . Lysander, Helena . . . Q 2; Enter Egeus and his daughter Hermia . . . Ff.

15. *companion*] fellow: in a depreciatory or contemptuous sense. The words "companion" and "fellow" have exchanged meanings in later usage.

15. *pomp*] in the classic sense, and probably suggested by "funerals" in line 14. See 19, *post.*

15. [Exit Philostrate] If the part of Philostrate was doubled with that of Egeus, as is very probable, Philostrate of course must leave the stage at this point.

19. *pomp*] Cf. *King John*, II. i. 304:

"Shall braying trumpets and loud churlish drums,
Clamours of hell, be measures of our pomp?"

19. *triumph*] a general term for public exhibitions of various kinds, or shows, such as masques, revels, etc. It is frequent in the historical plays. Wright points out that the title of Bacon's 37th Essay is "Of Masques and Triumphs," and that the Essay treats of "masques" alone; consequently they may have been considered synonymous. Cf. *1 Henry IV.* III. iii. 46, where Falstaff says of Bardolph, "O thou art a perpetual triumph, an everlasting bonfire light!"

19. *revelling*] The proposed reading "revelry" is ingenious, but unconvincing. Theseus's speech does not necessarily conclude with a rhyming couplet. Whatever may have been the exact pronunciation of revelry in Shakespeare's time, it is extremely probable that key was pronounced "kay"; and Marlowe rhymes it with "play," vol. iii. (ed. Bullen), 287:

"Whose nice perfection in love's play
Shall tune me to the highest key."

Dryden rhymes it with "lay," "sway," and "prey."

20. *duke*] frequently applied in the early literature to any great leader. Shakespeare, beyond doubt, found it in *The Knightes Tale.*

21. *Egeus*] a trisyllable, accented on the second syllable; in F 2 "Egaeus."

23. *child*] often in Shakespeare with the meaning of female child, girl. See

Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her:
Stand forth, Lysander; and, my gracious duke,
This man hath witch'd the bosom of my child:
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,
And interchanged love-tokens with my child:
Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung,
With feigning voice, verses of feigning love;
And stolen the impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats; messengers
Of strong prevailment in unharden'd youth:
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart;
Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,
To stubborn harshness: and, my gracious duke,

24, 26. *Stand forth, Demetrius . . . Stand forth, Lysander*] as stage-directions in Qq, Ff; Rowe, *corr.* 27. *This man hath*] Qq, F 1, Collier, Keightley; *This hath* F 2, 3, 4; *witch'd*] Theobald, Warburton, Johnson, Dyce, Keightley, Hudson; *bewitch'd* Qq, Ff. 31. *feigning love*] *feigned love* Hanmer. 35. *unharden'd*] *vnhardened* Qq, *vnhardned* F 1.

Winter's Tale, III. iii. 71, "a very pretty barne! A boy or a child, I wonder?" where the usage is probably, like "barne," dialectic.

27.] The reading of the Qq, Ff may be supported from *Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 47:

"This youth, howe'er distress'd,
appears he hath had
Good ancestors."

31. *feigning voice . . . feigning love*] Rowe's spelling, for the "faining . . . faining" of the Qq, Ff seems more appropriate to the gist of Egeus's charge against Lysander, namely, the stealing and cunning filching of Hermia's heart. But Furness prefers the older reading used in its not unusual sense of "loving," "longing," "yearning." "Surely," he says, "there was nothing feigned nor false in Lysander's love, nor any discernible reason why he should sing in a falsetto voice." Craig thinks the meaning here may be "low," "plaintive," and that Shakespeare may be quibbling on the musical sense of the word, which is to sing softly, hum an air. The *Promptorium Parvulorum* (*c.* 1440), 153, 1, has "Feynyn yn syngynge, or synge lowe." And Palsgrave (1530), 548, 1, "We maye nat synge out . . . but lette us fayne this songe." Cf. also T. Wilson, *Rhet.* 72, "He feyneth to the lute marveilouse swetely." *New. Eng. Dict. s.v.* The form of the word may be an instance of the indifferent use of the active and passive forms common in Elizabethan English. Cf. III. ii. 31, "distracted fear."

33. *conceits*] Cotgrave: Gentilesses, "prettie conceits, deuices, knacks, feats, trickes."

Be it so she will not here before your grace
Consent to marry with Demetrius,
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens;
As she is mine, I may dispose of her:
Which shall be either to this gentleman
Or to her death; according to our law,
Immediately provided in that case.

The. What say you, Hermia? be advised, fair maid:
To you your father should be as a god;
One that composed your beauties; yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax,
By him imprinted, and within his power
To leave the figure, or disfigure it.
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Her. So is Lysander.

The. In himself he is:
But, in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

Her. I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

The. Rather your eyes must with his judgement look.

Her. I do entreat your grace to pardon me.
I know not by what power I am made bold;
Nor how it may concern my modesty,
In such a presence here, to plead my thoughts;

39. *so*] Cf. III. ii. 314, "so you will let me quiet go."

45. *Immediately*] expressly, precisely. Steevens considered the line to have "an undoubted mark of legal commonplace." No doubt; but the "commonplace" exactly suits the speaker and the occasion. See Rushton, *Shakespeare a Lawyer*, 1858, p. 38: "'Contrary to the form of the statute in that case made and provided' is the allegation which concludes indictments for offences which are contrary to the statute; if the offence is indictable at common law the concluding words are, 'against the peace of our lord the King, his crown and dignity.'"

54. *in this kind*] in this respect, *i.e.* of marriage.

54. *voice*] Cf. *All's Well*, II. iii. 60, "O'er whom both sovereign power and father's voice I have to use."

But I beseech your grace, that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case,
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

The. Either to die the death, or to abjure
For ever the society of men.
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires,
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,
Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,
You can endure the livery of a nun:
For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,
To live a barren sister all your life,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,

74. *their*] *there* Q 1. 76. *earthlier happy*] *earlier happy* Rowe (ed. 2); *earthly happier* Capell, Knight, Collier, Singer, Staunton; *earthly happy* Steevens conj.; *earthlier-happy* Walker, Dyce, Hudson.

65. *die the death*] This expression seems to be used by Shakespeare always of judicial punishment. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV. xiv. 26, "She hath betrayed me and shall die the death"; and *Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 96, where Cloten evidently considers himself the instrument of justice in slaying an outlaw (Guiderius).

68. *Know of*] "Ascertain from your youth" (Staunton).

69. *Whether*] A monosyllable in pronunciation, and very frequently so in Shakespeare.

70. *livery*] formerly signified any distinctive dress. Cf. II. i. 113, "Their wonted liveries"; and numerous other passages in Shakespeare.

70. *nun*] Used for the Delphic priestess in North's *Plutarch* (1631), p. 2 (Life of Theseus): "But Egeus desiring (as they say) to know how he might have children, went unto the City of Delphes, to the Oracle of Apollo: where by a Nunne of the temple, this notable prophecie was giuen him for an answer." Cf. Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, i. 212 (Bullen), "whose nun you are."

71. *mew'd*] confined, shut up; properly a term in falconry. Cf. *Richard III.* I. i. 132, and elsewhere; and see R. Holme's *Academy of Armory, etc.*, ii. c. xi.: "*Mew* is the place, whether it be abroad or in the house in which the Hawk is put during the time she casts, or doth change her feathers."

75. *pilgrimage*] Cf. *As You Like It*, III. ii. 137:

"Some, how brief the life of man
Runs his erring pilgrimage."

76–78.] The idea of the married state being preferable to the single is not uncommon in Shakespeare. It appears in the *Sonnets*; see especially *Sonnets* 1, 5, 54; it appears in Touch-

Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

Her. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

The. Take time to pause: and, by the next new moon,
(The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,
For everlasting bond of fellowship,)
Upon that day either prepare to die,
For disobedience to your father's will;
Or else, to wed Demetrius, as he would:
Or on Diana's altar to protest
For aye austerity and single life.

Dem. Relent, sweet Hermia;—and, Lysander, yield
Thy crazed title to my certain right.

Lys. You have her father's love, Demetrius;

81. *whose unwished*] Qq, F 1; *to whose unwished* F 2, 3; *to whose unwish'd* F 4. 87. *your*] *you* F 2.

stone's sentiment in *As You Like It*, III. iii. 56, "Is the single man therefore blessed?" Walker quotes from the *Colloquies* of Erasmus (Colloq. Proci et Puellæ): "Ego rosam existimo feliciorem, quæ marescit in hominis manu, delectans interim et oculos et nares, quam quæ senescit in frutice." Cf. Lyly, *Midas*, II. i.: "You bee all young and faire, endevour all to bee wise and vertuous; that when, like roses, you shall fall from the stalke, you may be gathered and put to the still." Cf. also Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, i. 262 (Bullen):

"Virginity. albeit some highly prize it,
Compar'd with marriage, had you tried them both,
Differs as much as wine and water doth."

80. *virgin patent*] privilege of virginity, and the liberty that belongs to it, Wright. Cf. *Othello*, IV. i. 208, "If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her *patent* to offend."

84, 85. *sealing-day . . . bond*] Cf. the legal phraseology of I. i. 45, *ante*, 98, *post*, and "seal of bliss," III. ii. 144.

92. *crazed title*] A title with a flaw. Cotgrave: "Accrazer, to break, burst, craze, bruise." Cf. Chaucer, *The Canon's Yeoman's Tale*, 934 (ed. Pollard), "I am right siker that the pot was crased"; Lyly's *Euphues* (ed. Arber), 58, "Yes, yes, Lucilla, well doth he knowe that the glasse once crased will with the least clappe be cracked"; *King Lear*, III. iv. 175, "grief hath crazed my wits"; and Peele, *David and Bethsabe*, sc. iii. 36, ed. Bullen, "Some dainties easeful to thy crazed soul."

Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him.

Ege. Scornful Lysander! true, he hath my love;
And what is mine my love shall render him;
And she is mine; and all my right of her
I do estate unto Demetrius.

Lys. I am, my lord, as well derived as he,
As well possess'd; my love is more than his;
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd,
If not with vantage, as Demetrius';
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
I am beloved of beauteous Hermia:
Why should not I then prosecute my right?
Demetrius, I 'll avouch it to his head,
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,

94. *Hermia's*] *Hermia* Tyrwhitt conj. 98. *unto*] *upon* Hanmer. 101. *fortunes*] *fortune's* Rowe, Pope, Theobald, Warburton, Johnson. 102. *Demetrius'*] Pope, Hanmer; *Demetrius* Qq, Ff. 104. *beauteous*] *beautious* Qq. 107. *Nedar's*] *Nestor's* Walker conj.

98. *estate unto*] Cf. *Tempest*, IV. i. 85:

"And some donation freely to estate
On the blest lovers";

and *As You Like It*, V. ii. 13, "All the revenue . . . will I estate upon you." Furness remarks: "If Shakespeare elsewhere discloses the lawyer, he betrays the layman here. A lawyer would, instinctively almost, say, 'Estate upon,' or 'on,' as indeed Shakespeare has done elsewhere in the only two places, I believe, in which he has used the verb." But is this not hypercriticism? Surely "unto" is merely a reminiscence of the *habendum* clause of a conveyance.

99. *well derived*] well-born. Cf. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, V. ii. 23, "that you are well derived."

104. *beauteous*] "The spelling *beautious* in the Quartos may possibly indicate a pronunciation of *ti* like *sh*. If so, it is possibly the pronunciation of merely the compositors, and it is somewhat strange that both of them should here agree. This is another reminder of the gap which lies between Shakespeare and us, and of the futility of examining microscopically the spelling or even the punctuation of his plays as they have been transmitted to us." Furness.

106. *to his head*] to his face, in his teeth. Cf. *Measure for Measure*, IV. iii. 147: "to the head of Angelo accuse him home and home"; *Much Ado*, V. i. 62: "Know, Claudio, to thy head, Thou hast so wrong'd"; and *King Lear*, V. iii. 147: "Back do I toss these treasons to thy head." Craig refers to Golding's Ovid's *Metam.* (1611), p. 157, "I made complaint to Paris and accused him to his head."

Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
Upon this spotted and inconstant man.
The. I must confess that I have heard so much,
And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof;
But, being over-full of self-affairs,
My mind did lose it. But, Demetrius, come;
And come, Egeus; you shall go with me,
I have some private schooling for you both.
For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
To fit your fancies to your father's will;
Or else the law of Athens yields you up
(Which by no means we may extenuate)
To death, or to a vow of single life.
Come, my Hippolyta; what cheer, my love?
Demetrius, and Egeus, go along:
I must employ you in some business
Against our nuptial, and confer with you

114. *lose*] *loose* Q 1. 118. *fancies*] *fancy* Keightley conj. 125. *nuptial*] *nuptiall* Qq, F 1; *nuptialls* F 2, 3, 4, Rowe, etc.

110. *spotted*] stained, wicked. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, II. iii. 74, "Spotted, detested, and abominable"; *Richard II.* III. ii. 134, "their spotted souls"; *King Lear*, v. iii. 139: "A most toad-spotted traitor." Cotgrave has Taché: "spotted, blotted, stained, blemished, disgraced." So Cavendish's *Metrical Visions*, "Spotted with pride, viciousness, and cruelty."

113. *self-affairs*] Cf. *Measure for Measure*, III. ii. 280, "self-offences"; *Troilus and Cressida*, II. iii. 182, "self-breath"; and *Cymbeline*, III. iv. 149, "self-danger."

117. *arm yourself*] Cf. *Hamlet*, III. iii. 24, "Arm you to this speedy voyage."

123. *go*] where we should say "come." Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, IV. v. 7; *2 Henry IV.* II. i. 191; and *Othello*, v. i. 181.

125. *nuptial*] Shakespeare seems to have preferred the singular to the plural form, and the singular is printed by the editors in every passage where the word occurs, with the exception of *Pericles*, v. iii. 80, where we have the plural form; but for this Shakespeare is not responsible. Similarly, "funeral" and "funerals." Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, v. iii. 105, "His funerals shall not be in our camp." Furness very pertinently remarks: "As long as the source of our knowledge of Shakespeare's language is a text transmitted to us by several compositors, it is hazardous to assert that Shakespeare employs any special form of a word. In the instance from *Othello*, the Qq, it is true, have the plural 'nuptialls,' but the word in the Ff is in the singular, as Wright notes." Cf. *Tempest*, v. i. 308.

Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

Ege. With duty and desire we follow you.

[*Exeunt all but Lysander and Hermia.*

Lys. How now, my love? Why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

Her. Belike, for want of rain; which I could well
Beteem them from the tempest of my eyes.

Lys. Ay me! for aught that I could ever read,

127. Exeunt . . .] Exeunt Manet Lysander and Hermia Ff; Exeunt Qq. 128. *Scene II.*] Pope, Hanmer, Warburton, Fleay. 131. *my*] Qq, *mine* Ff. 132. *Ay me! for aught that I could ever*] *Eigh me: for aught that I could euer* Qq; *ought* Q 2; *For ought that euer I could* F 1; *Hermia for ought that ever I could* F 2, 3, 4; *Ay me! for aught that ever I could* Dyce; *Ay me!*] *Ah me!* Johnson.

127. Exeunt all but Lysander and Hermia.] "It was a strange oversight on the part of Egeus to leave his daughter with Lysander." Wright. "The plot requires this private conference between Hermia and Lysander, at which the scheme to leave Athens may be arranged. Shakespeare's device to bring about the conference is . . . artificial, . . . In his later plays, when he is more experienced in stage-craft, Shakespeare so contrives his plot that one event springs naturally from another, in accordance with probability." Verity. Pope, Hanmer, and Warburton began a new scene here; but, as the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* was almost certainly printed from a stage copy, the authority of the Folio cannot be ignored or gainsaid, and hence we must keep to the present division into scenes.

129. *chance*] *i.e.* How chances it? as in *Hamlet*, II. ii. 343, "How chances it they travel?" Cf. v. i. 310, *post.*

130. *Belike*] still used in Lancashire.

131. *Beteem*] "pour down upon 'em," Pope. "Give them, bestow upon them," Johnson. Capell considers "beteem them" stands for "beteem *to* them," *i.e.* the roses, and that the word is used in the sense of a pouring out. So Steevens. Staunton, Grant White, and Knight consider the meaning to be "afford," "yield," "allow"; and this sense is no doubt suitable here. Cf. *Hamlet*, I. ii. 141, "that he might not beteem the winds of heaven"; the only other passage in Shakespeare where the word occurs, and means "permit," "allow." Dyce paraphrases, "to give in streaming abundance." The sense of the passage would seem to be simply "pour on or for them." The word meant "to be pregnant," "to be full of"; and is certainly still used in the North of England, Scotland, and Ireland in the sense of pouring, *e.g.* "it is teeming," "it is a teeming day," "it is teeming with rain"; and Swift uses it in the sense of "pour." Cf. "stelled" in *King Lear*, III. vii. 64. Craig remarks that as Shakespeare very often plays on the two meanings of a word, no doubt he does so here.

132. *Ay me!*] The "Hermia" of F 2, 3, 4 is certainly more impressive than the mere self-pitying exclamation of Lysander, and gives a certain amount of point and pathos to the opening of

Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth:
But, either it was different in blood;—
Her. O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low!
Lys. Or else misgraffed in respect of years;—
Her. O spite! too old to be engaged to young!
Lys. Or else it stood upon the choice of friends;—
Her. O hell! to choose love by another's eyes!
Lys. Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it;

133. *hear*] *here* Q 1. 136. *low*] Theobald; *loue* Qq, Ff. 138. *to young*] *too young* F 4. 139. *friends*] Qq, *merit* Ff, *men* Collier. 140. *eyes*] Qq; *eie* F 1; *eye* F 2, 3, 4.

his speech; but on the balance of probability the reading of the Qq "Eigh me," *i.e.* "Ay me," seems preferable, and cannot be disregarded. Bp. Newton, in his edition of Milton (1749), long ago called attention to the resemblance between Lysander's complaint and that of Adam, in *Paradise Lost*, x. 898–906.

136, 138, 140.] It seems clear that, as Halliwell says, "the author evidently intended both the speakers should join in passionately lamenting the difficulties encountered in the path of love." Coleridge, however, *Notes and Lectures* (1874 ed.), 101, says: "There is no authority for the alteration; but I never can help feeling how great an improvement it would be if the two former of Hermia's exclamations were omitted (*i.e.* lines 136, 138): and the third and only appropriate one would then become a beauty and most natural."

136. *low*] Theobald's excellent reading for the "loue" of the Qq, Ff. He thinks Hermia answering Lysander's complaint of the difference in blood must necessarily say low, and that in this way the antithesis is kept up in the terms. This is one of the curses prophesied by Venus, in *Venus and Adonis*, 1131–1140, "Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend," etc.

137. *misgraffed*] *i.e.* ill-grafted. "The form 'graft' is corrupt and due to a confusion with 'graffed,' originally the past-participle of 'graff.' Shakespeare has 'grafted,' *Macbeth*, IV. iii. 51; but he has rightly also 'graft' as a past-participle, *Richard III.* III. vii. 127. Cf. *As You Like It*, III. ii. 124, "I'll graff it with you, and then I shall graff it with a medlar."

139. *friends*] The reading of the Qq, for which the Ff substitute "merit." "The substitution," says Furness, "can hardly be deemed either a compositor's sophistication or an accident. A change so decided must have been made with authority; it is a change, moreover, not from an obscure word to a plainer word, but from a plain word to one more recondite in meaning. A 'choice of merit' is a choice enforced through desert or as a reward, qualities with which true love or 'sympathy in choice' can have nothing in common. It is a choice good enough in itself, but worldly-wise, calculating, one of the roughest of obstructions to the course of true love, in that it may be urged by

Making it momentany as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,
And ere a man hath power to say,—Behold!
The jaws of darkness do devour it up:
So quick bright things come to confusion.
Her. If, then, true lovers have been ever cross'd

143. *momentany*] Qq, *momentarie* Ff. 148 *do*] *to* F 3, 4. 146. *spleen*] *sheen* Hanmer conj. MS.

parents so plausibly; and this very urging is implied in Hermia's phrase of choosing 'by another's eye,' and possibly the vehemence of her expletive indicates that this obstruction is the worst of the three. But, with the exception of Rowe and R. G. White (in his first edition), all editors have adopted 'friends' of the Quartos, and only two have any remarks on it."

143. *momentany*] "The old and proper word." Johnson. "Momentany seems to have been the earlier form, from Fr. *momentanie*, Lat. *momentaneus*." Wright. Craig quotes two early examples: "Everything in this world is caduke, transitory, and momentany," Bp. Fisher's *Works* (Mayor, *Early Eng. Text Soc. Ed.*), p. 196; and "And therefore besought him that he would not preferre an uncertain and momentany benefit," Daniel's *History of England*, ed. iii. (Grosart, *Works*, iv. 215). And see Tyndall's translation of 2 Cor. iv. 17, "oure excedinge tribulacion which is momentany and light."

144. *Swift as a shadow*] Furness compares *Romeo and Juliet*, II. v. 4:

"love's heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,
Driving back shadows over lowring hills."

145. *lightning*] Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, II. ii. 120:

"Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,
Ere one can say, 'It lightens.'"

145. *collied*] here in the literal sense, "blackened," "smutted." Cotgrave: "Charbonné, painted, marked, written with a coale, collowed, smeered, blacked with coales; (hence) also darkened." Grose (*Provincial Glossary*) gives, "*Colley*, the black or soot from a kettle." In the literal sense, cf. Ben Jonson, *Poetaster*, IV. iii. 242, "Thou hast not collied thy face enough"; and in the metaphorical of "darkened," cf. *Othello*, II. iii. 211, "and passion having my best judgment collied."

146. *in a spleen*] in a flash, a violent haste; implying a sudden outburst, *e.g.* of some passion. Similarly, of swift or violent motion, in *King John*, II. i. 448, "With swifter spleen than powder can enforce"; and V. vii. 50, "scalded with my violent motion And spleen of speed to see your majesty!" Shakespeare uses the word with the other meanings of "humour, caprice, and inconstancy" (Johnson); and of violent mirth, as "the spleen was anciently supposed to be the cause of laughter" (Steevens).

150. *ever cross'd*] always crossed. Cf. "customary cross," 153, *post*, and "still," 212, *post*.

It stands as an edict in destiny:
Then let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross;
As due to love as thoughts and dreams and sighs,
Wishes and tears, poor fancy's followers.
Lys. A good persuasion; therefore, hear me, Hermia.
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child;
And she respects me as her only son.
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues:
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us. If thou lovest me then,
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night;
And in the wood, a league without the town,
Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
To do observance to a morn of May,

154. *due*] *dewe* Q 1. 159, 160. *And . . . leagues*] transposed according to Johnson's conj., adopted by Keightley and Hudson; *From . . . son* Qq, Ff. 160. *remote*] Qq, *remou'd* Ff. 167. *to a*] Qq, Capell, etc.; *for a* Ff; *to the* Pope, etc.

151. *edict*] accented on the ultimate, as in *Love's Labour's Lost*, I. i. 11: "Our late edict shall strongly stand in force"; but on the penultimate in *1 Henry IV.* IV. iii. 79.

155. *fancy's*] *i.e.* love's; frequent in Shakespeare. Cf. in this play, "fancy-free," II. i. 164; "fancy-sick," III. ii. 96; "Fair Helena, in fancy, following me," IV. i. 165; and "fancy-monger," *As You Like It*, III. ii. 382.

156. *persuasion*] "persuasive argument" (Wright), or "decision"; not (as Schmidt) "opinion," "belief."

159, 160.] Johnson proposed to transpose these lines as they stand in the Qq, Ff, and I think rightly. Cf. v. i. 267, 268; 416, 417.

159. *respects*] regards, looks upon me.

160. *remote*] the reading of the Qq is adopted by almost all subsequent editors. Furness, however, prefers the Folio reading, and quotes *Hamlet*, I. iv. 61, "It waves you to a more removed ground"; and *As You Like It*, III. ii. 360, "so removed a dwelling."

167. *observance*] Cf. IV. i. 106; and Chaucer, *The Knightes Tale*, 1500 (ed. Pollard), "And for to doon his observaunce to May"; and his *Troilus and Creseide*, ii. 112, "And lat us don to May some observaunce." "Scarcely an English poet from Chaucer to Tennyson is without a reference to the simple customs by which our ancestors celebrated the advent of the flowers," Wright.

There will I stay for thee.

Her. My good Lysander!
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,
By his best arrow with the golden head,
By the simplicity of Venus' doves,
By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,
When the false Troyan under sail was seen;
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke;
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

Lys. Keep promise, love. Look, here comes Helena.

Enter HELENA.

Her. God speed, fair Helena! Whither away?

Hel. Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.
Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!

171, 172. *By the . . . loves*] transposed by Singer (ed. 2). 172. *loves*] Q 1; *loue* Q 2, Ff. 180. *Scene III.*] Pope; *speed, fair*] Theobald, *speed fair* F 1. 182. *your fair*] Qq, *you fair* Ff, *you, fair* Rowe (ed. 2).

169. *Cupid's . . . bow*] Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 581, "by Cupid's bow he doth protest."

170. *best arrow*] alluding to the arrows of Ovid's *Metam.*, i. 467, in Golding's translation, in which Shakespeare was well versed:

"Therefrom his quiver full of shafts
two arrows he did take
Of sundry powers; tone causeth
Love, the tother doth it slake.
That causeth loue is all of golde,
with point full sharpe and
bright,
That chaseth loue is blunt, whose
steele with leaden head is
dight."

Cf. Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, i. 161 (Bullen), "Thence flew Love's arrow with the golden head"; and Sidney's *Arcadia*, II., "But arrowes two and tipt with gold or lead." Cf. also *Twelfth Night*, I. i. 35:

"How will she love when the rich
golden shaft
Hath killed the flock of all affections else
That live in her."

172.] The allusion is "most probably to the *cestus* of Venus," Keightley, *Expositor*, 1867.

174. *Troyan*] So Qq, F 1.

182. *your fair*] The "you" of F 1 makes admirable sense; the first "fair" being then taken as an adjective, *i.e.* Demetrius loves you who are

Your eyes are lode-stars; and your tongue's sweet air
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
Sickness is catching; O, were favour so,
Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
The rest I 'ld give to be to you translated.
O, teach me how you look; and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart!

Her. I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

186. *so,*] Qq, Ff; *so!* Theobald. 187. *Yours would I*] Hanmer; *Your words I* Qq, F 1; *Your words Ide* F 2, 3, 4. 188. *ear . . . voice*] *hair . . . hair* Hudson (Lettsom conj.). 189. *tongue*] *voice* Cartwright conj. 191. *I 'ld*] *I 'd* Hanmer, White ii., Keightley, Hudson; *ile* Q 1; *Ile* Q 2, F 1, 2; *I 'le* F 3, 4.

fair; and the second "fair" as a substantive, of course in the sense of fairness, beauty, which is very common in Shakespeare.

183. *lode-stars*] leading or guiding stars. Cf. *Lucrece*, 179:

"Whereat a waxen torch forthwith he lighteth,
Which must be lode-star to his lustful eye";

and Chaucer, *Knightes Tale*, 2059:

"how woful Calystope . . .
Was turned from a womman to a bere,
And after was sche maad the lode-sterre."

Sir John Maundevile in his *Travels* (ed. Halliwell, p. 180) thus describes the "lode-star": "In that Lond, ne in many othere beyonde that, no man may see the Sterre transmontane, that is clept the Sterre of the See, that is unmevable, and that is toward the Northe, that we clepen the Lode-Sterre."

186. *favour*] "that is, feature, countenance," Steevens. It refers, I think, to the personal qualities of physical beauty enumerated 188 *sqq.* Cf. *As You Like It*, iv. iii. 87: "The boy is fair, Of female favour"; and the play upon the word in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 33:

"An if my face were but as fair as yours
My favour were as great."

187. *Yours would I catch*] the excellent emendation of Hanmer. It is impossible to defend the reading of the Qq or Ff; and even Furness deserts the Folio here.

188, 189. *My ear should catch . . . melody*] There is no reason for any change of reading here. It was surely necessary for Helena's ear to catch Hermia's voice before her own tongue should catch the sweet melody of her rival's. For the rhyme of "eye" with "melody," cf. ii. ii. 13, 14.

190. *bated*] excepted, lit. abated.

191. *translated*] transformed. See iii. i. 121.

Hel. O, that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

Her. I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

Hel. O, that my prayers could such affection move!

Her. The more I hate, the more he follows me.

Hel. The more I love, the more he hateth me.

Her. His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

Hel. None, but your beauty; would that fault were mine!

Her. Take comfort; he no more shall see my face;
Lysander and myself will fly this place.
Before the time I did Lysander see,
Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me:
O, then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turn'd a heaven unto a hell!

Lys. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:

200. *folly, Helena, is no fault*] Q 1; *folly, Helena is none* Q 2, Ff; *fault, oh Helena, is none* Hanmer; *fault, faire Helena, is none* Collier; *Helena*] *Helen* Dyce (ed. 2), Hudson. 201. *beauty*] F 1, *beauty's* Hudson (Daniel conj.). 205. *as*] Q 1; *like* Q 2, Ff. 207. *unto a*] Q 1; *into* Q 2, Ff; *unto* Boswell.

200. ***no fault of mine***] So Q 1, and the majority of editors; Q 2 and Ff having "none of mine." Furness adheres to the text of F 1, and remarks: "If we assume that Hermia is trying to comfort her dear friend with assurances of her enduring love, then there is a charm in this asseveration, in the Folio, that she does not share in Demetrius's folly, which gives hate for love, but that she returns love for love; and her words become sympathetic and caressing. But if we adopt the text of Q 1, Hermia's words have a faint tinge of acerbity (which, it must be confessed, is not altogether out of character), as though she were defending herself from some unkind imputation, and wished to close the discussion (which would also be not unnatural). It is again in favour of the Quarto that Helena replies, 'would *that* fault were mine.' The demonstrative 'that' seems clearly to refer to a 'fault' previously expressed. This weighs so heavily with Capell that he says the word 'fault' must 'of necessity have a place' in Hermia's line. Lastly, it is in favour of the Folio that Helena's first words are Hermia's last. 'It is *none* of mine,' says Hermia. 'It is *none* of yours,' assents Helena."

207. ***unto a hell!***] Dyce, *Remarks*, 44, says: "The context, *a* heaven, is quite enough to determine that the reading of Fisher's 4to (*i.e.* Q 1), unto *a* hell, is the right one, excepting that *unto* should be *into*. Cf. a well-known passage of Milton:

'The mind is its own place and in itself
Can make *a* heaven of hell, *a* hell of heaven,'

Paradise Lost, i. 254."

To-morrow night, when Phœbe doth behold
Her silver visage in the watery glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,
A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,
Through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

Her. And in the wood, where often you and I
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet;
There my Lysander and myself shall meet:
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and stranger companies.
Farewell, sweet playfellow; pray thou for us,
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!

213. *gates*] Qq, F 1, 2; *gate* F 3, 4. 216. *sweet*] Theobald; *sweld* Qq, Ff. 219. *stranger companies*] Theobald, etc.; *strange companions* Qq, Ff. 221. *thy*] *thine* Rowe (ed. 2).

211. *liquid pearl*] Cf. II. i. 15, "And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear."

212. *still*] always, constantly. Cf. "ever," 150, *ante*.

215. *faint primrose-beds*] "faint" is here, I think, an epithet of colour, hardly of smell. See *Winter's Tale*, IV. iv. 122, "pale primroses, That die unmarried"; and *Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 221, "The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose." Marshall points out that Shakespeare uses "pale" and "faint" together, namely, in *King John*, V. vii. 21, "I am the cygnet to this pale faint swan."

219. *stranger companies*] Theobald's happy conjecture for "strange companions." He remarks: "This whole scene is strictly in rhyme, and that it deviates . . . I am persuaded is owing to the ignorance of the first and the inaccuracy of the later editors; I have, therefore, ventured to restore the rhymes, as I make no doubt but the poet first gave them. 'Sweet' was easily corrupted into 'sweld,' because that made an antithesis to 'emptying'; and 'strange companions' our editors thought was plain English, but 'stranger companies' a little quaint and unintelligible. Our author elsewhere uses the substantive 'stranger' adjectively, and 'companies' to signify 'companions.' See *Richard II.* I. iii. 143, 'But tread the stranger paths of banishment'; and in *Henry V.* I. i. 53, 'His companies unletter'd, rude and shallow.' And so in a parallel word, 'My riots past, my wild societies,' *Merry Wives*, III. iv. 8." Steevens and Halliwell adhere to the Folio readings. Dyce believes that more certain emendations were never made; Wright considers that the rhyme is decisive in favour of Theobald's conjecture; and Furness that in a modernised text Theobald's emendations should be adopted unquestionably. It is an example of the confusion of the final "e" and "er."

Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.
[*Exit Hermia.*

Lys. I will, my Hermia.—Helena, adieu:
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you!
[*Exit Lysander.*

Hel. How happy some, o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know.
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities.
Things base and vile, holding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity.
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;
And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind:
Nor hath Love's mind of any judgement taste;
Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste:
And therefore is Love said to be a child,

225. *dote*] Qq, *dotes* Ff. 229. *do*] Qq, *doth* Ff. 232. *vile*] Qq, F 4; *vilde* F 1, 2, 3; *quantity*] *quality* Johnson conj. 237. *figure*] Rowe, *figure*, Qq, Ff; *haste*] *hast* F 4.

225. *dote*] The "dotes" of the Folio is a clear instance of the interpolation of the final "s," early recognised by Pope as an error, and acknowledged by every subsequent editor.

226. *other some*] "A quaint but pretty phrase, of frequent occurrence in early works," Halliwell. See *Measure for Measure*, III. ii. 94, "other some, (say) he is in Rome"; and Chapman's Fifth Sestiad of *Hero and Leander*, line 387, vol. iii. (Bullen).

231. *admiring*] Cf. *King Lear*, II. i. 41, "Mumbling of wicked charms."

232. *quantity*] perhaps here meaning "proportion, corresponding degree." So in *Hamlet*, III. ii. 177, "For women's fear and love holds quantity"; *i.e.* keep proportion to each other (Dowden); and *Merry Wives*, V. v. 235:

"*Fent.* You would have married her
most shamefully,
Where there was no proportion
held in love."

So "holding no quantity" may be "where there is no proportion held in worth," Craig. "Having no proportion to the estimate formed of them," Wright. Chambers thinks the word is here used in the sense of "large quantity."

Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,
So the boy Love is perjured everywhere:
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:
Then to the wood will he, to-morrow night,
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither, and back again. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Athens. Quince's House.*

Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, *and* STARVELING.

Quin. Is all our company here?

239. *he is so oft*] Q 1; *he is oft* Q 2; *he is often* F 1; *he often is* F 2, 3, 4. 240. *in game themselves*] *themselves in game* F 3, 4. 244. *this*] Q 1, Ff; *his* Q 2. 245. *So he*] *Lo, he* Capell; *Soon it* Rann; *Soon he* Daniel conj. 248. *this*] Qq, *his* Ff.

Scene II.

Scene II.] Capell; *Scene IV.* Pope. Quince's House] A Room in Quince's house Capell; changes to a cottage Theobald. Enter . . .] Enter Quince, the Carpenter; and Snugge, the Ioyner; and Bottom, the Weauer; and Flute, the Bellowes mender; and Snout, the Tinker; and Starueling, the Tayler Q 1; Enter Quince the Carpenter, Snug the Ioyner, Bottome the Weauer, Flute the Bellows-mender, Snout the Tinker, and Starueling the Taylor Q 2, Ff.

249. *dear expense*] "A painful purchase, a bitter bargain. 'If I have thanks, the sacrifice which I make in giving Demetrius this information will be doubly distressing to me.' Of course she would much rather that Demetrius, her old lover, did not thank her for setting him on the traces of his new mistress. Thanks would be a mockery in the circumstances, and this is what Helena means to say . . . The 'sight' of Demetrius and not his 'thanks' was to be Helena's recompense." W. N. Lettsom (*Blackwood*, Aug. 1853).

Scene II.

"In this scene Shakespeare takes advantage of his knowledge of the

Bot. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.

Quin. Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the duke and the duchess, on his wedding-day at night.

Bot. First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on; then read the names of the actors; and so grow to a point.

Quin. Marry, our play is—The most lamentable comedy,

3. *according to*] Q 1, Ff; *according* Q 2. 10. *grow to a point*] Qq, etc.; *grow on to a point* F 1, 2, 3; *grow on to appoint* F 4; *go on to a point* Warburton; *go on to appoint* Collier.

theatre to ridicule the prejudices and the competitions of the players. Bottom, who is generally acknowledged the principal actor, declares his inclination to be for a tyrant, for a part of fury, tumult, and noise, such as every young man pants to perform when he first steps upon the stage. The same Bottom, who seems bred in a tiring-room, has another histrionical passion. He is for engrossing every part, and would exclude his inferiors from every possibility of distinction. He is therefore desirous to play Pyramus, Thisbe, and the Lion, at the same time." Johnson.

2. *You were best*] *i.e.* to or for you it were best, a well-known construction.

2. *generally*] a Bottomism for "severally," "particularly," "individually."

3. *scrip*] script, list. Cf. its use, in the sense merely of a written document, in Holland's *Pliny*, 1601, vii. chap. 25 (of Julius Cæsar), "That when upon the battell at *Pharsalia*, as wel the cofers and caskets with letters & other writings of *Pompey* as also those of *Scipioes* before Thapsus, came into his hands, he was most true unto them, & burnt al, without reading one script or scroll."

4. *scroll*] This word, coming as it does immediately after "scrip," seems to indicate that Shakespeare had the above quoted passage from Holland's *Pliny* in his mind.

7. *wedding-day at night*] Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, I. iii. 21, "On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen." Craig refers to Lyly (ed. Fairholt), i. 215: "GALLATHEA, Played before the queenes majestie at Greenwich on New-Yeeres day at Night by the children of Paules."

10. *grow to a point*] Bottom probably means no more than come to the point. Cf. Peele, *Arraignment of Paris*, II. i.:

> "Our reasons will be infinite, I trow,
> Unless unto some other point we grow."

Craig quotes Dekker and Webster's *Northward Ho* (Works, Pearson, 1873, p. 15), "No, I will like a justice of peace grow to the point." Chambers, however, would explain the phrase as meaning, "do the thing thoroughly, completely."

11. *lamentable comedy*] See Introduction (xxxvi), and v. i. 56–60. Steevens thought this was very probably a burlesque on the title-page of Cambyses, *A lamentable Tragedie, mixed full of pleasant Mirth, conteyning the life of*

and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.

Bot. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry.—Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll: Masters, spread yourselves.

Quin. Answer as I call you. — Nick Bottom, the weaver.

Bot. Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

Quin. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

Bot. What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

Quin. A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

Bot. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in

19. *weaver*] *Weauer?* Q 1. 24. *gallant*] Qq, etc.; *gallantly* Ff. 28. *storms*] *stones* Collier.

Cambises, King of Percia, etc., by Thomas Preston [? 1561]; but it is doubtful, as Furness rightly remarks, if a burlesque of any particular play was meant.

12.] Warton, *History of English Poetry* (1824), iv. 243, remarks that in 1562 was licensed "the boke of Perymus and Thesbye."

24. *gallant*] Probably this is nothing more than an example of Shakespeare's free use of adjectives as adverbs.

28. *storms*] Does Bottom mean storms of grief or of applause? Cf. *2 Henry VI.* III. i. 349, "I will stir up in England some black storms." Collier's reading, "stones," however, is worth consideration, and cannot be lightly dismissed. See, for the idea, amongst other passages, *Two Gentlemen*, III. ii. 79, "Orpheus' lute . . . Whose golden touch could soften steel and stones"; *Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 80:

"therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods";

Julius Cæsar, III. ii. 234:

"that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny";

Hamlet, III. iv. 126:

"His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable"; and

Macbeth, III. iv. 123:

"Stones have been known to move and trees to speak."

some measure. To the rest:—yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

29. *To the rest:—yet*] *To the rest;—yet*, Theobald; *To the rest yet*, Qq, Ff. 31. *cat*] *cap* Warburton; *in, to*] *in and to* Keightley conj. 32. *split. The*] *split—the* Theobald; *split the* Qq, F 1, 2, 3; *split to* F 4.

29. *To the rest:—yet*] Go on to name the rest of the players. Yet, stop a moment, my chief humour, etc. Cf. 41, *post*, "Now name the rest of the players." And then Bottom further interrupts.

30. *Ercles*] "In Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit*, 1592, a player who is introduced says: 'The twelue labors of *Hercules* haue I terribly thundered on the stage.'" Malone. "Henslowe, in his *Diary*, mentions 'the firste part of Herculous,' a play acted in 1595, and afterwards, in the same manuscript, the 'two partes of Hercolus' are named as the work of Martin Slather or Slaughter. In Sidney's *Arcadia*, ed. 1598, i. 50: 'leaning his hands vpon his bill, and his chin vpon his hands, with the voyce of one that playeth *Hercules* in a play.'" Halliwell. "The part of Hercules was like that of Herod in the Mysteries, one in which the actor could indulge to the utmost his passion for ranting." Wright.

31. *tear a cat*] Apparently a proverbial phrase for tearing a passion to tatters (*Hamlet*, III. ii. 10). Edwards, *Canons of Criticism*, 1765, p. 52, thinks this a burlesque upon Hercules's killing a lion. Heath, *Revisal of Shakespeare's Text*, 1765, p. 45, takes Warburton's emendation, "cap," seriously, and supposes "it might not be unusual for a player, in the violence of his rant, sometimes to tear his cap." Capell takes Bottom seriously, and supposes "he might have seen 'Ercles' acted, and some strange thing torn, which he mistook for a cat." Cf. Day's *The Isle of Guls* (1606), "A whole play of such tear-cat thunderclaps." Steevens remarks: "In Middleton's *The Roaring Girl*, 1611, v. 1, there is a character called 'Tearcat,' who says, 'I am called by those who have seen my valour Tear-cat.'" In an anonymous piece, called *Histriomastix*, 1610, a captain says to a company of players:

> "Sirrah, this is you would rend and tear the cat
> Upon a stage, and now march like a drown'd rat."

(Act v. p. 73, ed. Simpson.)

32. *all split*] Cf. *The Tempest*, I. i. 65, "we split, we split!"; Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Scornful Lady*, II. iii., "Two roaring boys of Rome, that make all split"; and their *Wild Goose Chase*, v. vi., "I love a sea voyage and a blustering tempest, and let all split." Dyce says the phrase was a favourite expression with our old dramatists. In his *Few Notes*, 1853, p. 61, he believes it has not been remarked that the expression is properly a nautical phrase, and quotes Greene's *Neuer too Late*, sig. G3, ed. 1611, "He set downe this period with such a sigh, that, *as the Marriners say*, a man would haue thought *al would haue split againe*." Craig quotes Middleton's *Witch* (ed. Dyce, Works, iii. 282), "I'll make you eat your word, I'll make all split else"; and his *Roaring Girl*, IV. ii. (ii. 518, ed. Dyce), "If I sail not with you both till all split." This whole passage is further illustrated by Hamlet's well-known advice to the players, III. ii. 1 *sqq*.

"The raging rocks,
And shivering shocks,
Shall break the locks
Of prison-gates;
And Phibbus' car
Shall shine from far,
And make and mar
The foolish fates."

This was lofty!—Now name the rest of the players.—This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

Quin. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

Flu. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

Flu. What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

Quin. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

Flu. Nay, faith, let me not play a woman; I have a beard coming.

33–40.] As in Johnson; prose in Qq, Ff. 34. *And*] *With* Farmer conj. 43. *lover*] *lover's* Hudson (Daniel conj.). 44. *bellows-mender*] *Bellowes mender?* Q 1. 46. *Flute,*] Q 1; omitted Q 2, Ff.

33–40.] Printed as prose in the Qq, Ff. I am inclined to think Rolfe is right in suggesting that the lines may be a burlesque of a translation of Seneca's *Hercules Furens*, 1581. He quotes:

"O Lord of ghosts! whose fiery flash
That forth thy hand doth shake,
Doth cause the trembling lodges twain
Of Phœbus' car to shake" . . .
"The roaring rocks have quaking stirr'd,
And none thereat hath push'd;
Hell gloomy gates I have brast ope
Where grisly ghosts all hush'd
Have stood."

Shakespeare's lines do not read like a quotation from any actual play. Surely Shakespeare himself was quite capable of turning them out for the purposes of this play.

37. *Phibbus' car*] Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV. viii. 28, "carbuncled Like holy Phœbus' car"; and *Cymbeline*, V. v. 190, 191, "Phœbus' wheel . . . Been all the worth of's car." Craig thinks Shakespeare got the idea from Golding's Ovid's *Metam.*, Book ii.

47. *wandering knight*] Cf. *1 Henry IV.* I. ii. 17, "Phœbus, he, that wandering knight so fair." Craig.

50. *a beard coming*] On the Elizabethan stage female parts were played by boys. Craig refers to Lodge's

Quin. That 's all one; you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

Bot. An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too: I 'll speak in a monstrous little voice:—"Thisne, Thisne,—Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear! thy Thisby dear! and lady dear!"

Quin. No, no; you must play Pyramus; and, Flute, you Thisby.

Bot. Well, proceed.

Quin. Robin Starveling, the tailor.

Star. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother.—Tom Snout, the tinker.

53. *An*] Pope; *And* Qq, Ff. 54. *too*] *to* Qq. 55. *Thisne, Thisne*] *Thisby, Thisby* Hanmer. 60. *tailor*] *Tailer?* Q 1. 63. *tinker*] *Tinker?* Q 1.

Rosalynde (ed. Newnes, 1902, p. 13), "with that casting up his hand he felt hair on his face, and perceiving his beard to bud, for choler he began to blush, and swore to himselfe that he would be no more subject to such slavery." Cf. the well-known passage in *Hamlet*, II. ii. 442, "Thy face is valanced since I saw thee last."

52. *speak as small*] Bottom's "monstrous little voice," 54, *post.* Cf. Chaucer's *The Flower and the Leaf*, 180, "with voices sweet entuned and so smalle"; *Merry Wives*, I. i. 49, of Anne Page, "She has brown hair and speaks small like a woman"; and *King Lear*, v. iii. 272, "Her voice was ever soft, Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman." Craig refers to Golding's Ovid's *Metam.*, Book ii. f. 21(*a*) (ed. 1612): "anon his voice began More shrill and small than for a man"; also to North's *Plutarch* (ed. ii., 1595, p. 1007), "besides her voyce was small and trembling" (of Cleopatra).

55. "*Thisne, Thisne*"] "The words are printed in italic in the old copies, as if they represented a proper name, and so 'Thisne' has been regarded as a blunder of Bottom's for Thisbe. But as he has the name right in the very next line, it seems more probable that 'Thisne' signifies 'in this way'; and he then gives a specimen of how he would 'aggravate' his voice. 'Thissen' is given in Wright's *Provincial Dictionary* as equivalent to 'in this manner'; and 'thissens' is so used in Norfolk." Wright. Shakespeare may have written the word simply "thisen"; hence the corruption.

63. *mother*] "There seems a double forgetfulness of our poet in relation to the characters of this Interlude. The father and mother of Thisbe, and the father of Pyramus, are here mentioned, who do not appear at all in the Interlude; but 'Wall' and 'Moonshine' are both employed in it, of whom there is not the least notice taken here," Theobald. "What the moderns call a forgetfulness in the poet was in truth

Snout. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You, Pyramus' father; myself, Thisby's father;— Snug, the joiner, you, the lion's part:—and, I hope, here is a play fitted.

Snug. Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

Quin. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

Bot. Let me play the lion, too; I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I will make the duke say, "Let him roar again, let him roar again."

Quin. An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all.

All. That would hang us, every mother's son.

Bot. I grant you, friends, if you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us: but I will aggravate my voice so, that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale.

66, 67. *and, I hope, here*] *and I hope here* Qq, *and I hope there* Ff, *I hope there* Rowe (ed. 2). 69. *it be*] *be* F 1. 76. *An*] Capell; *And* Q 1; *If* Q 2, Ff. 80. *friends*] *friend* F 4; *if*] Qq, *if that* Ff. 83. *you*] Qq, omitted Ff. 85. *an*] Pope; *and* Qq, Ff.

his judgement: [these parts] promised little, and had been long in expectance; whereas Quince's 'Prologue' and the other actors, 'Moonshine' and 'Wall,' elevate and surprise," Capell. "The introduction of Wall and Moonshine was an afterthought; see III. i. 59 and 67," Steevens.

83. *aggravate*] Bottomese for "moderate," or some such word. Cf. *2 Henry IV.* II. iv. 175, Mrs. Quickly's "I beseek you now, aggravate your choler."

84. *sucking dove*] It is idle to dismiss Bottom's language, as some editors do, on the ground that it is "idle to try and convert intentional nonsense into sense." Furness. In his "bottomisms" there is always some soul of sense if we observingly distil it out.

Quin. You can play no part but Pyramus: for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man, as one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely, gentleman-like man; therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

Bot. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in?

Quin. Why, what you will.

Bot. I will discharge it in either your straw-colour beard, your orange-tawny beard, your

94. *colour*] Qq, *colour'd* Ff.

Here I think the expression must refer to the manner in which young doves are fed. Craig well compares *As You Like It*, I. ii. 97 *sqq.*:

"*Cel.* Here comes Monsieur Le Beau.

Ros. With his mouth full of news.

Cel. Which he will put on us, as pigeons feed their young";

and remarks: "*i.e.* with bill placed inside bill. Other young birds gape, and the parent birds drop in the food; but pigeons feed differently, just as they drink differently, viz. like horses, without lifting their heads. Hence the young pigeon alone looks like a sucking animal."

85. *an 'twere*] as if it were. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, I. ii. 188, "He will weep you an 'twere a man born in April." "An" and "and" are frequently confounded.

87. *sweet-faced man*] Craig refers to Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, IV. iv. (Works, ed. Cunningham, p. 109), "Is 't not a sweet-fac'd youth, Pilia?" and Shirley's *Grateful Servant* (Works, ed. Gifford, ii. 21).

87, 88. *as one shall see in a summer's day*] Craig says: "This proverbial expression is found in *Henry V.* III. vi. 67; and see *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, I. v. 99 (Henry Porter), Hazlitt's Dodsley (Old Plays), vii. 356: 'as good a man as . . . e'er went on neat's leather, or as one shall see upon a summer's day.' See also Day, *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green* (Works, Bullen, p. 114)."

93, 94. *straw-colour beard*] Halliwell says: "The custom of dying beards is frequently referred to. 'I have fitted my divine and canonist, dyed their beards and all' — *Silent Woman*. Sometimes the beards were named after scriptural personages, the colours being probably attributed as they were seen in old tapestries. 'I ever thought by his red beard he would prove a Judas' —*Insatiate Countess*, 1613. 'That Abraham-coloured Trojan' is mentioned in *Soliman and Perseda*, 1599; and 'a goodly, long, thick Abraham-colour'd beard' in *Blurt, Master Constable*, 1602. Steevens has conjectured that 'Abraham' may be a corruption of 'auburn.' A 'whay-coloured beard' and 'a kane-coloured beard' are mentioned in the *Merry Wives*, 1602, the latter being conjectured by some to signify a beard of the colour of cane, which would be nearly synonymous with the straw-coloured beard alluded to by Bottom."

94. *orange-tawny*] Cf. III. i. 128. Cotgrave has "Orangé: m. ée. f. orange-tawnie, orange-coloured."

purple-in-grain beard, or your French crown colour beard, your perfect yellow.

Quin. Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and then you will play bare-faced.—But, masters, here are your parts: and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse: for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company, and our devices known. In the meantime I will draw a bill of

96. *perfect*] Ff, *perfit* Qq. 103. *will we*] Q 1; *we will* Q 2, Ff.

95. *purple-in-grain beard*] a beard dyed purple, or some shade of red. Cotgrave gives "Migraine: scarlet or purple in graine." The best explanation of the phrase will be found in Marsh's *Lectures on the English Language*, 1860, p. 67: "A species of oak or ilex (*Quercus coccifera*) is frequented by an insect of the genus *coccus*, which, when dried, furnishes a variety of red dyes, and which, from its seed-like form, was called in later Latin *granum*, in Spanish *grana*, and *graine* in French; from one of these is derived the English word grain, which, as a colouring material, strictly taken, means the dye produced by the coccus insect, often called in the arts *kermes* [the Arabic and Persian name of the insect] . . . The colour obtained from kermes or grain was peculiarly durable; . . . another phrase was afterwards applied to other colours as expressing their durability. Thus in *Comedy of Errors*, III. ii. 107, when Antipholus says, 'That's a fault that water will mend.' 'No, sir,' Dromio replies, ''tis in grain; Noah's flood could not do it.' And again in *Twelfth Night*, I. v. 253, when Viola insinuates that Olivia's complexion had been improved by art, the latter replies, ''Tis in grain, sir; 'twill endure wind and weather.' When the original sense of *grain* grew less familiar, it was used chiefly as expressive of *fastness* of colour; and *dyed in grain*, originally meaning dyed with kermes, then dyed with fast colour, came at last to signify dyed in *the wool* or raw material. The verb *ingrain*, meaning to incorporate a colour or quality with the natural substance, comes from *grain* used in this last sense." Craig refers to Cole's *Lat. Dict.*, 1764, *cocinnus*, in grain; and Edwards's *Damon and Pitheas*, i. 57, Hazlitt's Dodsley, iv. 207, "a villain for his life, a varlet died in grain"; also Holland's *Pliny*, Book xvii., ed. 1601, p. 461, for a curious note on scarlet graine; and North's *Plutarch*, 1595, p. 37, "For he ever wore a coat of purple in grain."

95. *French crown colour*] the yellowish colour of a gold coin. Quince's reply refers to the baldness which resulted from a certain disease then supposed to be more prevalent in France than elsewhere.

102. *without*] a locative use. Cf. IV. i. 155, "Without the peril of the Athenian law."

properties, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.

Bot. We will meet; and there we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously. Take pains; be perfect: adieu.

Quin. At the duke's oak we meet.

Bot. Enough; hold or cut bow-strings. [*Exeunt.*

108. *most*] Q 1; *more* Q 2, Ff. 109, 110. *Take . . . adieu*] given to Quince by Singer (ed. 2), (Collier). 109. *pains*] Qq, F 1; *paine* F 2, 3, 4. 110. *perfect*] Ff, *perfit* Qq. 112. *hold or cut*] *break or not* Hanmer conj. MS.

106. *properties*] The stage requisites of costume or furniture. In Henslowe's *Diary* (p. 273, Shak. Soc.), there is an "Enventary tacken of all the properties for my Lord Admiralles men, the 10 of Marche 1598," wherein we find such items as "j rocke, j cage, j tombe, j Hell mought (*i.e.* mouth)." Again, "Item, ij marchpanes, & the sittie of Rome." "Item, j wooden canepie; owld Mahemetes head," etc. See Halliwell, *ad loc.*, and Collier's *Eng. Dram. Poetry*, iii. 159. See also note on "tiring-house," III. i. 4.

109. *obscenely*] It is not quite certain what word Bottom meant, but probably it was "seemly." See *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. i. 145, for a similar misuse, "When it comes so smoothly off, so obscenely, as it were, so fit."

109–111. *Take pains . . . meet*] Collier thought these words should be given to Quince, as the manager, rather than to Bottom; but the assumption of the manager's duty is entirely characteristic of Bottom.

111. *duke's oak*] Halliwell thinks these localities, "the palace wood" (101), and "the duke's oak," bear some appearance of being derived from English sources, and that they may have been names of places familiar to Shakespeare in his own country. Cf. Herne's oak in the *Merry Wives*, v. iii. 15, 80, etc. "It was in Shakespeare's day in Warwickshire, and it still is the custom in many parts of England to give such names to large oaks: was this in Shakespeare's mind here?" (Craig). I think it is extremely probable.

112. *hold or cut bow-strings*] "To meet, *whether bow-strings hold or are cut*, is to meet in all events. 'He hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string,' says Don Pedro in *Much Ado*, III. ii. 10, 'and the little hangman dare not shoot at him,'" Malone. Capell's explanation, though generally adopted, does not seem authoritative: "When a party was made at butts, assurance of meeting was given in the words of that phrase: the sense of the person using them being, that he would *hold* or keep promise, or they might *cut* his *bow-strings*, demolish him for an archer." Malone's explanation is much superior to Capell's. Bottom's final reply to Quince is: "Enough said; we will not fail to meet at the duke's oak—in any event—*in any weather*—whether bow-strings hold or cut." "Hold" and "cut" in this passage are, I think, examples of the "middle" voice, or, more accurately, perhaps, of transitives used intransitively. In very wet weather the bow-string, if not protected, would be more liable to fray and snap asunder. It will be remembered that the English archers at Creçy protected their strings during the thunderstorm which preceded the battle, while the Genoese bowmen did not. If the phrase is not proverbial,—and I

ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Wood near Athens.*

Enter, from opposite sides, a Fairy and PUCK.

Puck. How now, *fair* spirit! whither wander you?
Fai. Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire, 5

Act II. Scene I.] Rowe. Actus Secundus Ff, omitted Qq. A wood . . .] Capell. Enter . . .] Enter a Fairie at one doore, and Robin Goodfellow at another Qq, Ff. 1. Puck.] Rowe, Robin Qq, Rob. Ff; *spirit!*] fair *spirit* Editor; *whither*] *whether* Q 2, F. 2–9.] So arranged by Pope, but as four lines in Qq, Ff. 3, 5. *Thorough*] Q 1; *Through* Q 2, Ff.

hardly think it is,—Shakespeare, who must have had a sound knowledge of archery, was quite capable of inventing it for the occasion. See Rushton's *Shakespeare an Archer*, 1897.

Act II. Scene I.

1.] It is not by any means certain that this line is not pure blank verse, and that a word has not dropped out before "spirit." Cf. I. i. 180, "God speed, *fair* Helena! *Whither* away?" It is noteworthy that Puck uses only plain ten-syllabled verse in this scene; and it is not till line 65 of scene ii. of this Act that he adopts a lyric measure. Cf. Oberon's change from his lyric incantation, IV. i. 73–76, to the plain iambic of line 77. Another view is that "spirit" and "whither" must be treated as monosyllables. See the note on line 33 of this scene, and Walker, *Crit.* i. 183, and *Vers.* 103.

2–17.] Coleridge has been aptly quoted as saying that "this measure had been invented and employed by Shakespeare for the sake of its appropriateness to the rapid and airy motion of the fairy by whom the speech is delivered." Note the swift rush of the rhythm caused by the use of the amphimacer (–⏑–) in lines 2–5, followed by the transition (lines 6–13) to the trochaic measure, indicating the fairy's service of the queen, necessarily less rapid; and, finally (lines 14–17), the slower and statelier iambic measure suitable for a farewell to the "lob of spirits."

3, 5. *Thorough*] the reading of Q 1, and rightly, for the sake of the metre, as in line 106 of this scene. There is a close resemblance to these lines, as Halliwell points out, in Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, VI. viii. 32. 1, "Through hills and dales, through bushes and through breres"; the imitation being probably Spenser's; and Drayton imitated them in his *Nymphidia* (1627), 309–311.

I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moonës sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green:
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;

7. *than*] Q 1, *then* F; *moonës*] Steevens, Malone, Var., White ii.; *moons* F; *moony* Grant White (Steevens conj.), Hudson. 10. *tall*] *all* Collier.

7. *moonës*] Clearly a disyllable, and an example of the inflected M. E. genitive. The uncontracted form was probably becoming obsolete in Shakespeare's time. So "nightës shade," IV. i. 98 of this play; "whalës bone," *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 332, and Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, III. i. 15; "Earthës increase," *Tempest*, IV. i. 110. Steevens quotes a passage from Sidney's *Arcadia*, Book ii. p. 262 (1598), "Your presence, sister deare, first to my moony spheare." Hudson adopts "moony sphere" on the ground, not only that it is a common poetical phrase, but that it is certain Shakespeare would not have allowed, among lines of exquisite music, a line so unrhythmical as this as it stands in the Folio. The true explanation of the form "moonës" is, I think, that it is a reminiscence of Shakespeare's perusal of the *Knightës Tale*. See Introduction, p. xxxvi.

7. *sphere*] In the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, which prevailed when Shakespeare wrote, the earth was conceived as the centre of nine or ten consecutive hollow crystalline spheres or globes, which rotated round it, carrying the moon planets and fixed stars. These spheres or globes were supposed to be swung bodily round the earth in twenty-four hours by the top sphere, the *primum mobile*, thus making an entire revolution in a day and night. See Furnivall, *New Shak. Soc. Trans.* (1877–79), p. 431. Cf. *Tempest*, II. i. 183, "you would lift the moon out of her sphere" (with reference to the belief in the power of a magician over the heavenly bodies); and Marlowe's *Faustus*, ed. Dyce, 1862, p. 83: "Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere."

9. *dew her orbs*] Halliwell explains orbs as "the well-known circles of dark-green grass frequently seen in old pasture-fields, generally called 'fairy-rings,' and supposed to be created by the growth of a species of fungus, *Agaricus orcades*, Linn. These circles are usually from four to eight feet broad, and from six to twelve feet in diameter, and are more prominently marked in summer than in winter." The latest scientific explanation is that of Mr. Sidney Turner (*British Med. Journal*, 28th July 1894), who considers that the "so-called 'fairy-rings' were produced by the better and more vigorous growth of the grass, owing to the excess of nitrogen afforded by the fungi, which composed the ring of the previous year." Cf. *Merry Wives*, v. v. 69:

"And nightly, meadow-fairies, look you sing,
Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring";

and *Tempest*, v. i. 36:

"you demi-puppets that
By moonshine do the green-sour ringlets make,
Whereof the ewe not bites."

See also Douce (*Illustrations of Shakespeare*, i. 180), Brand's *Popular Antiqq.* ii. 480 (Bohn), and Dyer, *Folk-lore of Shakespeare*, 15.

10. *cowslips . . . pensioners*] Johnson says the cowslip was a favourite among the fairies. The allusion is probably to the Queen's band of gentle-

In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours:
I must go seek some dew-drops here and there,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits, I 'll be gone;
Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

Puck. The king doth keep his revels here to-night;
Take heed the queen come not within his sight;

11. *coats*] *cups* Collier. 14. *here and there*] Hanmer; *here* Qq, Ff; *clear* Daniel conj.

men pensioners, composed of the handsomest and tallest young men, selected from the best families, and with large fortunes. Cf. *Merry Wives*, II. ii. 79, "and yet there has been earls, nay, which is more, pensioners." "In the month of December, 1539," says Stowe, *Annals*, p. 973 (ed. 1615), "were appointed to waite upon the King's person fifty gentlemen called *Pensioners* or *Speares*, like as they were in the first yeare of the King."

11. *gold coats*] Cf. *1 Henry IV.* IV. i. 100, "Glittering in golden coats like images" (of the "madcap Prince of Wales and his comrades").

11, 12. *spots . . . rubies*] Probably the well-known spots of a deeper yellow, verging to a crimson shade, at the bottom of each leaf or petal. Cf. *Cymbeline*, II. ii. 37:

"On her left breast
A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops
I' th' bottom of a cowslip."

13. *freckles*] Cf. *Henry V.* V. ii. 49, "The freckled cowslip, burnet, and green clover."

14. *here and there*] Hanmer's reading is supported by III. ii. 381, "ghosts wandering here and there"; and if the rhyme of lines 14 and 15 be objected to, the reply is that Shakespeare has contented himself with it in III. ii. 411, 412. See also II. ii 134, 135. Marlowe, *Hero and Leander*, first sestiad, 59, 60, rhymes "sphere" and "there."

15. *hang a pearl*] Cf. I. i. 211, *ante*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, I. v. 48, "Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear." Halliwell thinks there are two allusions in the line — (1) to the custom of wearing pearls in the ears; (2) to the notion of the old naturalists that the dewdrop was the commencing form of the pearl. See Holland's *Pliny*, Book ix. cap. 35. The passage is imitated in an anonymous play, *The Wisdome of Doctor Dodypoll* (1600), iii. 5:

"'Twas I that led you through the painted meads,
Where the light fairies danced upon the flowers,
Hanging on every leaf an orient pearl."

16. *lob*] here used by the fairy as descriptive of the contrast between Puck's larger and rougher figure and the airy and delicate shapes of the other elves, at least of those attendant on Titania. Puck is not like the ethereal Titania, "a spirit of no common rate," III. i. 156, *post*. The word is the Celtic *llob*, a clown or dolt, used with a reference to size or awkwardness. Cf. the "lubbar-fiend" and his "hairy strength" of Milton's *L'Allegro*, 110

For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she, as her attendant, hath
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king;
She never had so sweet a changeling:
And jealous Oberon would have the child
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild:
But she, perforce, withholds the loved boy,
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy:
And now they never meet in grove, or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled star-light sheen,
But they do square; that all their elves, for fear,
Creep into acorn-cups, and hide them there.

23. *changeling*] a child (usually stupid or ugly) supposed to have been left by fairies in exchange for one stolen, *New Eng. Dict.* See Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, I. x. 65, "Such, men do chaungelings call, so chaung'd by Faeries theft." Johnson remarks: "This is commonly used for the child supposed to be left by the fairies, but here for the child taken away." See Drake, *Shakespeare and his Times*, ii. 325, and Introduction. Titania's reference to the boy hardly bears out the fairy's account. See lines 123–136, *post*. The word is a trisyllable in this line, but in 120, *post*, it is probably only a disyllable.

25. *to trace*] Cf. *Much Ado*, III. i. 16, "As we do trace this alley up and down"; and Milton, *Comus*, 423, "May trace huge forests and unharboured heaths." I agree with Furness in thinking that there is here a reference to hunting or tracking game, rather than merely "traversing" or "wandering through."

27. *all her joy*] Cf. IV. i. 4, "my gentle joy."

29. *sheen*] a substantive, "brightness," "fairness." Anglo-Saxon *scéne*, Mid. Eng. *schene*, fair, Ger. *schön*. Some editors consider the word to be an adjective in this passage; but Milton certainly uses it as a substantive in *Comus*, 1003:

"But far above in spangled sheen,
Celestial Cupid, her fam'd son, advanc'd."

30. *square*] quarrel, square their shoulders, come to high words. In Shakespeare's time the word was also in common use as a substantive. Cotgrave gives "Se quarrer: to strout, or square it, looke big on't, carrie his armes a-kemboll braggadochio-like." Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, II. i. 45, "'Twere pregnant they should square between themselves"; and III. xiii. 41, "Mine honesty and I begin to square." Craig refers to North's *Plutarch* (ed. 2, 1595), *Life of Fabius*, "Hannibal hearing of their jarre and squaring together, sought straight opportunitie to make their discord finely to serve his turne."

Fai. Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Good-fellow: are not you he
That frights the maidens of the villagery;
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;
And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;

32. *Either*] *Or* Pope. 33. *sprite*] Q 1; *spirit* Q 2, Ff. 34. *not you*] Q 1; *you not* Q 2, Ff. 35. *frights*] *fright* F 3, 4; *villagery*] *villageree* Q 1; *villagree* Q 2, F 1, 2, 3; *vilagree* F 4. 36–39. *Skim . . . labour . . . make . . . make . . . Mislead*] Qq, Ff; *Skims . . . labours . . . makes . . . makes . . . Misleads* Collier (Malone conj.). 36. *sometimes*] *sometime* Dyce (ed. 2).

32. *Either*] contracted into a monosyllable in pronunciation. Cf. II. ii. 155, and see Walker, *Vers.* 103, for instances of such contractions.

33. *sprite*] So printed in Q 1. Walker, *Crit.* i. 193, remarks: "It may safely be laid down as a canon that the word 'spirit' in our old poets, wherever the metre does not compel us to pronounce it disyllabically, is a monosyllable." Cf. line 1 of this scene, and see *Macbeth*, IV. i. 127, "Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites" (although Shakespeare may not have written this line).

34. *Robin Good-fellow*] See Introduction, pp. xl, xli.

35, 36. *frights . . . Skim . . . labour*] an example of a change of construction, perhaps caused by a change of thought, and common enough in Shakespeare. Abbott thinks, and rightly, that the transition is natural from Are you *he* that frights? to Do not *you* skim . . . labour? See also Exodus vi. 7.

35. *villagery*] village folk, peasantry. Johnson thought the word meant a district of villages, but it seems rather to mean a number of "villagers." Hence the "maidens of the villagery" simply means peasant maids, or, as Johnson himself calls them, country-girls.

36, 37.] Johnson thought the sense of these lines was confused, on the ground that the mention of the "quern" or hand-mill, was out of place, as the fairy was not telling the good but the evil done by Robin. Hence he proposed to transpose the lines, or read,

> "And sometimes make the breathless
> housewife chern
> Skim milk and bootless labour in
> the quern."

But, as Ritson correctly points out, we must understand all these to be mischievous pranks. Robin skims the milk when it ought not to be skimmed, and grinds the corn when it is not wanted.

36. *quern*] Anglo-Saxon *cwéorn*, a hand-mill for grinding corn, in its most primitive form, consisting, as Halliwell points out, of a revolving stone worked by a handle moving in the circular cup of a larger one. See Chaucer, *Monkes Tale, C. T.*, 3264 (ed. Pollard), of Samson, "Where as they made hym at the querne grynde." Johnson and Boswell in their respective *Tours in the Hebrides*, make mention of this primitive household instrument.

38. *barm*] yeast, leaven, a provincial term yet used, as Steevens remarked, in the Midland counties, and universally in Ireland. Cotgrave has "Leveton: m. Yeast, or Barme." "The froth or barme . . . [has] a property to keepe the skin faire and cleare in women's faces," Holland, *Pliny* (1601), ii. 145.

Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck:
Are not you he?

Puck. *Fairy*, thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night,
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,

42. Fairy, *thou*] Collier; *The same, thou* Hanmer; *I am—thou* Johnson; *Spirit, thou* Editor conj.; *speak'st*] *speakest* Q 1, *speakest me* Capell. 42, 43, *thou . . . night*] One line in Qq. 46. *filly*] Q 1; *silly* Q 2, Ff. 47. *bowl*] F 4; *bole* Qq, F 1, 2, 3.

39. *Mislead*] Cf. Caliban in *The Tempest*, II. ii. 6:

"Nor lead me, like a firebrand, in the dark,
Out of my way";

Ariel's pranks in IV. i. 178 *sqq.*; also IV. i. 197, "played the Jack," *i.e.* the Jack o' lantern. Milton has imitated this passage of the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* in his *Paradise Lost*, ix. 640, "Misleads th' amaz'd night-wanderer from his way."

40. *Hobgoblin . . . and sweet Puck*] "Robin Goodfellow and Hob goblin were as terrible . . . as hags and witches be now," Reginald Scot, *Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584), VII. ii. 105. It will be remembered that "Puck" means simply "fiend" or "devil," hence the propitiatory epithet is not superfluous. See Introduction, p. xli.

42.] The metre is certainly defective. I agree with Dyce in thinking that the introduction of the word "Fairy" at the commencement of Puck's reply is "far better than the other attempts that have been made to complete the metre." The "spirit" of line 1, *ante*, is probably the next best reading. The idea of a pause being "naturally" made before the reply to the fairy's question as being intended to take the place of the missing foot, which is the idea of R. G. White, Abbott, and Furness, is out of the question. A pause on Puck's part would be anything but natural to Puck.

46. *filly foal*] "filly" is the reading of Q 1, and is almost certainly correct, and for obvious reasons. Furness, as usual, "sees no reason for deserting the Folio."

47. *gossip's bowl*] Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III. v. 175, "Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl." "Originally a christening-cup; for a gossip or 'godsib' was properly a sponsor. Hence from signifying those who were associated at the festivities of a christening it came to denote generally those who were accustomed to make merry together," Wright. Archbishop Trench (*English Past and Present*, 204, ed. 4) mentions that the word retains its original signification among the peasantry of Hampshire. Warton, in his note to Milton's *L'Allegro*, 100, is probably correct in identifying the "spicy nut-brown ale" with the "gossip's bowl" of Shakespeare. "The composition was ale, nutmeg, sugar, toast, and roasted crabs or apples. It was called lambs-wool." Cf. the "dog's-nose" of *The Pickwick Papers*, ch. 33.

In very likeness of a roasted crab;
And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
And on her wither'd dew-lap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
And "tailor" cries, and falls into a cough;

49. *bob*] *bab* Gould conj. 50. *dew-lap*] Rowe (ed. 2); *dew-lop* Qq, Ff. 54. "*tailor*"] *rails or* Hanmer; *traitor* Perring conj. 54, 55. *cough . . . laugh*] *coffe . . . loffe* Qq, Ff.

48. *crab*] the wild apple. See *King Lear*, I. v. 16, "For though she's as like this as a crab's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell." Halliwell quotes from Parkinson's *Theat. Botanicum*, 1640, "the fruite is generally small and very sower, yet some more than others, which the country people, to amend, doe generally rost them at the fire and make them their winter's junckets." No doubt the "gossip's bowl" was included in the "winter cheer" of "the human mortals," line 101, *post*. For the rhyme of "crab" with "bob," cf. the pronunciation of "throstle" in III. i. 129.

51. *wisest aunt*] In this passage, the wisest or most sedate old dame or gossip; but "aunt" is frequently applied to a bawd or loose woman. See, in particular, the "summer songs for me and my aunts" of Autolycus in *Winter's Tale*, IV. iii. 2.

51. *saddest tale*] Cf. *Richard II.* v. i. 40:

"In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire
With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales
Of woful ages long ago betid";

and *Winter's Tale*, II. i. 25, "A sad tale's best for winter."

54. "*tailor*"] Johnson observes: "The custom of crying 'tailor' at a sudden fall backwards I think I remember to have observed. He that slips beside his chair falls as a tailor squats upon his board": a very doubtful explanation. Equally unsatisfactory is the suggestion of Furness, who says that "the slight substitution of an *e* for an *o* in the word 'tailor' will show that, as boys in swimming take a 'header,' the 'wisest aunt' was subjected to the opposite." Halliwell is very much nearer the mark when he says: "The expression is probably one of contempt, equivalent to 'thief,' and possibly a corruption of the older word 'taylard,' which occurs in the Romance of *Richard Cœur de Lion*, where two French justices term that sovereign, when reviling him, a 'taylard,' upon which the choleric monarch instantly clove the skull of the first and nearly killed the second." The Elizabethan use of the term, as one of contempt, appears to be confirmed by the following passage in *Pasquil's Night Cap*, 1612:

"Thieving is now an occupation made,
Though men the name of tailor doe it give."

And see the passage in Middleton's *Changeling*, I. ii. 161 (vol. vi. 23, ed. Bullen), "How many true" [*i.e.* honest] "fingers has a tailor on his right hand?" *Ant.* "As many as on his left, cousin." "Tailor," meaning "thief," would be a natural enough expression even for the "wisest aunt" to utter against the "practical joker" who had deprived her of her stool. The word is probably derived from the French "tailler," to cut; cf. "cutpurse."

54, 55. *cough . . . laugh*] "In the

And then the whole quire hold their hips, and laugh;
And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.
But room, *good* fairy! here comes Oberon.

Fai. And here my mistress. Would that he were gone!

Enter, from one side, OBERON, *with his train; from the other,* TITANIA, *with hers.*

Obe. Ill met by moon-light, proud Titania.

58. *room*] *make room* Pope, *room now* Dyce (ed. 2), *roomer* Nicholson conj. (Notes and Queries, 1864); good *fairy*] Editor, *fair fairy* Editor conj.; *faëry* Staunton (Johnson conj.); *room, fairy! here*] *fairy, room, for here* Seymour conj. 59.] Two lines in Ff; *he*] Qq, F 1; *we* F 2, 3, 4. 60.] Two lines in Ff. *Scene II.*] Pope. Enter . . .] Enter the King of Fairies, at one doore with his traine; and the Queene, at another with hers Qq, Ff.

present spelling" (*i.e. coffe . . . loffe* of the Qq, Ff) "I think we have," says Furness, "as Capell suggests, a phonetic attempt to reproduce the robustious laughter of boors . . . and 'loffe' should be retained in the text." However, little is to be gained by discarding the modern spelling, as it is difficult, if not impossible, to fix the exact pronunciation of "laugh" or "laughter" in Shakespeare's time. See Ellis, *Early English Pronunciation*, p. 963.

56. *neeze*] a form of "sneeze," Anglo-Saxon *niesan*. Cotgrave, "Esternuer: To neeze or sneeze." Cf. 2 Kings iv. 35, where "neesed" is the original text; and Job xli. 18, "neesings."

57. *wasted*] Cf. *The Tempest*, v. i. 302, "part of it (the night) I'll waste with such discourse."

58. good *fairy*] The attempts to explain or amend this defective line have been most unsatisfactory. Johnson thought "fairy or faery was sometimes of three syllables, as often in Spenser." Dyce "inserted 'now' for the metre's sake, which is certainly preferable to the usual modern emendation 'make room.' To print 'But room, faëry,' is too ridiculous." I quite agree with Dyce. Nicholson's "roomer," "a sea phrase," is, to say the least, fantastic; though Daniel thinks the conjecture excellent, and quotes from *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, vol. x. Hazlitt's Dodsley, p. 253, "If the devil be among us, it's time to hoist sail and cry 'roomer.'" Furness, as usual, will have no change, considering that "the break in the line affords sufficient pause to fill up the metre." It is certain that *some* word has fallen out of the line, and the epithet "good," which comes nearest to the trace of the letters of "room," and also near it in sound, and was therefore more likely to escape the compositor's eye or ear, would most appropriately be applied, and with patronising effect by Oberon's own lieutenant and right-hand man to an ordinary fairy, even though the personal attendant of Titania. Cf. IV. i. 48, "Welcome, good Robin."

Tita. What, jealous Oberon? Fairies, skip hence;
I have forsworn his bed and company.
Obe. Tarry, rash wanton; am not I thy lord?
Tita. Then I must be thy lady: but I know
When thou hast stolen away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steep of India?
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,

61. Tita.] Tit. Capell; Qu. Qq, Ff (and elsewhere); *Fairies, skip*] Theobald; *Fairy skip* Qq, Ff. (*skippe* Q 1); *Fairies, keep* Harness conj.; *Fairies, trip* Dyce conj. 65. *hast*] *wast* Ff. 69. *steep*] *steppe* Q 1; *steepe* Q 2, Ff.

61. *Fairies, skip*] Theobald's change from the "Fairy, skip" of the Folio; a change which has been adopted by nearly all editors. Capell, however, defends the Folio reading on the ground that the fairy there addressed is Titania's "leading fairy, her gentleman usher, whose moving-off would be a signal for all the rest of the train." The reading "fairy" probably took its rise in the elision of the final syllable of the plural before the consonant—in this case the same consonant—in the next word. This is a very frequent source of error.

66, 68. *Corin, Phillida*] Perhaps Shakespeare obtained these pastoral names from the English pastoral which appeared in *Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557, with the title "Harpalus' Complaint of Phillida's Love bestowed on Corin that loved her not, and denied him that loved her."

67. *pipes of corn*] The Vergilian "avena." Ritson quotes Chaucer's *House of Fame*, iii. 133 (ed. Morris):

"And many flowte and liltyng horne
And pipës made of grenë corne."

Cf. "When shepherds pipe on oaten straws," *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 913.

67. *versing love*] For the intransitive sense, see Sir P. Sidney, *Apol. for Poetrie* (ed. Arber, p. 29), "It is not riming and versing that maketh a Poet," etc. Craig refers to Milton's *Reason of Church-Government* (Prose Works, vol. i. p. 62, ed. 1753), "mine own choice in English, or other tongue, prosing or versing."

69. *steep*] So Q 2 and Ff. "Steppe," the reading of Q 1, has not met with general acceptance, on the ground that the word was not known in Shakespeare's day, or at least used in the sense of a vast plain, and this is also Dr. Murray's view. The idea in Shakespeare's mind was perhaps that of a lofty and precipitous range of mountains forming the extreme eastern boundary of India; and if this be so, "steep" is undoubtedly preferable. The Globe edition and the Cambridge editors read "steppe." Cf. Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, i. 116 (Bullen), "From steep pine bearing mountains to the plain." Milton apparently preferred "steep." See *Comus*, 139:

"Ere the blabbing Eastern scout,
The nice Morn, on the Indian steep
From her cabined loophole peep."

Your buskin'd mistress, and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded; and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

Obe. How canst thou thus, for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigouna, whom he ravished?
And make him with fair Aegles break his faith,
With Ariadne, and Antiopa?

Tita. These are the forgeries of jealousy:

77. *through the glimmering*] *glimmering through the* Warburton. 78. *Perigouna*] North's *Plutarch*, Grant White; *Perigenia* F 1; *Perigune* Pope (ed. 2) (Theobald); *Perigyné* Hanmer. 79. *Aegles*] *Eagles* Qq, Ff; *Aegle* Rowe. 80. *Antiopa*] *Atiopa* F 1.

75. *Glance at*] hint at, indirectly attack, Wright. Cf. *Comedy of Errors*, v. i. 66, "In company I often glanced at it"; and *Julius Cæsar*, I. ii. 323, "wherein obscurely Cæsar's ambition shall be glanced at."

77. *glimmering*] Cf. *Macbeth*, III. iii. 5, "The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day."

78. *Perigouna*] "This Sinnis had a goodly faire daughter called Perigouna, which fled away when she saw her father slaine. . . . But Theseus finding her, called her, and sware by his faith he would use her gently, and do her no hurt, nor displeasure at all." North's *Plutarch*, ed. 2 (1595), p. 3. I see no reason for departing from the spelling of Plutarch. Shakespeare had nothing to gain, either in rhythm or otherwise, by altering the spelling.

79. *Aegles*] "For some say that Ariadne hung herself for sorrow, when she saw that Theseus had cast her off. Others write, that she was transported by mariners into the Ile of Naxos, where she was married unto Œnarus, the priest of Bacchus; and they thinke that Theseus left her, because he was in love with another, as by these verses should appeare:

'Aegles, the Nymph, was loved of Theseus,
Who was the daughter of Panopeus.'"

North's *Plutarch*, ed. 2 (1595), p. 10.

80. *Antiopa*] "Philochorus, and some other holde opinion, that [Theseus] went thither with Hercules against the Amazones; and that to honor his valiantnes Hercules gave him Antiopa the Amazone. . . . Bion . . . saith that he brought her away by deceit and stealth, . . . and that Theseus enticed her to come into his ship, who brought him a present; and so soon as she was aboord, he hoysed his sail, and so carried her away." North's *Plutarch*, ed. 2 (1595), p. 14.

81–117.] See Introduction, xxiii *sqq.* A brief analysis of Titania's description of the "distemperature" of the seasons may enable the reader to understand the connection of ideas in the passage and

And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,
Or in the beached margent of the sea,

82. *the*] *that* Hanmer (Warburton). 85. *in*] *on* Pope.

the true sense of some of the expressions. By way of introduction we have (lines 81–87) the cause of the "progeny of evils" (115), viz. the debate and dissension of Oberon and his queen, and the "brawls with which he has disturbed her sport" (87). As pointed out by Malone, the succession of "therefores" in lines 88, 93, 103, all point to the quarrel as the cause of the elemental and planetary disturbances. (1) 88–92: "*Therefore* the winds . . . overborne their continents," *i.e.* the revenge of the winds has caused even petty rivers to everflow their banks. (2) 93–102: "*therefore* the ox . . . hymn or carol blest," *i.e.* owing to the floods the fruits of agriculture are lost, the flocks are drowned, summer sports are spoilt, poor weak mortals in a wintry summer lack the good cheer usual in winter; and (the season being summer) there are no hymns or carols, which are incidental to a true and seasonable winter. (3) 103–105: "*Therefore* the moon . . . diseases do abound," *i.e.* the moon, angry at our brawls, has made the air damp, moist, and unwholesome, which has caused numerous diseases of the respiratory organs. (Finally) 106–117: owing to our quarrel (or to this disturbance of the elements), the seasons all over the earth are altered and turned topsy-turvy, and their aspects are completely changed,—all through our dissensions. 101–114 Johnson proposed to arrange in the following order: 101, 107–114, 102–104, 106, 105. 105, 106 are transposed by Hudson, from the conjecture of Johnson. These proposals display ingenuity, but are entirely inadmissible. There is no valid reason for any rearrangement.

81. *forgeries*] inventions. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV. vii. 90, "in forgery of shapes and tricks."

82. *middle summer's spring*] Steevens is right in thinking that this expression means the beginning of "middle" or "mid" summer. "When trees put forth their second, or, as they are frequently called, their *midsummer* shoote." Henley. For spring in the sense of "beginning," see *2 Henry IV.* IV. iv. 35, "the spring of day"; and cf. *Comedy of Errors*, III. ii. 3, "Even in the spring of love, thy love-springs rot." Chambers says the nearest parallel to the phrase is in Churchyard's *Charitie*, 1595, where "a summer spring" apparently stands for "the beginning of summer."

84. *paved fountain*] Henley explains (perhaps rightly) as fountains whose beds were covered with pebbles, in opposition to those of the rushy brooks, which are oozy.

85. *in*] within (Halliwell). "In" was often used for "on" (Dyce). Cf. "falling in the land," 90, *infra*; and "gold strewed i' the floor," *Cymbeline*, III. vi. 50. Dyce, however, quotes an observation of W. N. Lettsom to the effect that printers confound these prepositions, as, *e.g.*, *Richard III.* v. i. 24, "to turn their own points in their masters' bosoms," where the Ff have "in" and the Qq "on."

85. *beached margent*] "formed by a beach, or which serves as a beach," Wright. Cf. *Timon*, v. i. 219, "upon the beached verge of the salt flood." "Margent" is an old form of "margin," which latter Shakespeare apparently never uses. Craig says that in the south of England pebbles for walks are called "beach"; and takes the expression to mean the margin strewn with beach, *i.e.* pebbles.

To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which, falling in the land,
Hath every pelting river made so proud,
That they have overborne their continents:
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat; and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard:
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
And crows are fatted with the murrion flock;
The nine-men's morris is fill'd up with mud;

91. *Hath*] Qq, Ff; *Have* Rowe (ed. 2); *pelting*] Qq, *petty* Ff. 95. *his*] *its* Pope. 97. *murrion*] *murrain* Theobald (ed. 2).

86. *ringlets*] Probably the fairies' tiny dances in a ring; scarcely the "gossamer ringlets" of Furness, or the "orbs" (9, *ante*) of Wright. Cf. "then maids dance in a ring" of T. Nash's (1567–1601 ?) *Song of Spring*.

87. *brawls*] noisy quarrels. Originally, a brawl was a kind of French dance, resembling a cotillon, as in *Love's Labour's Lost*, III. i. 9, "will you win your love with a French braule?" Its character appears from Cotgrave: "Bransle: a brawle or daunce wherein many (men and women) holding by the hands, sometimes in a ring and otherwhiles at length, moue together." It is difficult to say whether there is any etymological connection between these two words. "Brawl," meaning noisy quarrel, may be connected with the Old Eng. *braul*, *brall*, Dan. *bralle*, to talk much and noisily—perhaps an onomatopœic word.

89, 90. *suck'd up . . . fogs*] Cf. *King Lear*, II. iv. 169, "You fen-suck'd fogs drawn by the powerful sun"; and *Tempest*, II. ii. 1, "All the infections that the sun sucks up From bogs, fens, flats."

92. *they*] "The plural follows loosely, as representing the collection of individual rivers." Wright.

92. *continents*] banks. Cf. *King Lear*, III. ii. 58, "close pent up guilts Rive your concealing continents"; and *Hamlet*, IV. iv. 64, "tomb enough and continent To hide the slain."

97. *murrion*] Exodus ix. 3. For the variety of the spelling Wright quotes *King Lear*, I. i. 65, "champains" and "champions."

98. *nine-men's morris*] "This game was sometimes called *the nine mens merrils*, from *merelles* or *mereaux*, an ancient French word for the jettons or counters with which it was played.

And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,
For lack of tread, are undistinguishable: 100

99. *in*] *on* Collier.

The other term *morris* is probably a corruption suggested by the sort of *dance* which in the progress of the game the counters performed. In the French *merelles* each party had three counters only, which were to be placed in a line in order to win the game. It appears to have been the *Tremerel* mentioned in an old fabliau. See Le Grand, *Fabliaux et Contes*, ii. 208. Dr. Hyde thinks the morris or merrils was known during the time that the Normans continued in possession of England, and that the name was afterwards corrupted into *three mens morals*, or *nine mens morals*. If this be true, the conversion of *morals* into *morris*, a term so very familiar to the country people, was extremely natural. The doctor adds, that it was likewise called *nine-penny*, or *nine-pin miracle*, *three-penny morris*, *five-penny morris*, *nine-penny morris*, or *three-pin*, *five-pin*, and *nine-pin morris*, all corruptions of *three-pin*, *etc. merels*. Hyde, *Hist. Nerdiludii*, p. 202." Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare, etc.*, 1807. "In that part of Warwickshire where Shakespeare was educated, and the neighbouring parts of Northamptonshire, the shepherds and other boys dig up the turf with their knives to represent a sort of imperfect chess-board. It consists of a square, sometimes only a foot diameter, sometimes three or four yards. Within this is another square, every side of which is parallel to the external square; and these squares are joined by lines drawn from each corner of both squares, and the middle of each line. One party, or player, has wooden pegs, the other stones, which they move in such a manner as to take up each other's men, as they are called, and the area of the inner square is called the pound, in which the men taken up are impounded. These figures are by the country people called *Nine Men's Morris* or *Merrils*; and are so called because each party has nine men. These figures are always cut upon the green turf, or leys as they are called, or upon the grass at the end of ploughed lands, and in rainy seasons never fail to be *choked* [*fill'd*] *up with mud*." James. "*Nine men's morris* is a game still played by the shepherds, cowkeepers, etc., in the midland counties, as follows: A figure is made on the ground (like this which I have drawn) by cutting out the turf; and two persons take each nine stones, which they place by turns in the angles, and afterwards move alternately, as at chess or draughts. He who can place three in a straight line may then take off any one of his adversary's, where he pleases, till one, having lost all his men, loses the game." Alchorne. Cotgrave gives *s.v.* "Merelles, The boyish game called Merills or fiue-pennie Morris; played here most commonly with stones, but in France with pawnes, or men made of purpose, and tearmed *Merelles*." See also Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, p. 279 (ed. 2), and Nares, *Glossary*.

99. *the quaint mazes*] "Several mazes of the kind here alluded to are still preserved, having been kept up from time immemorial. On the top of Catherine-hill, Winchester, the usual play-place of the School, observes Percy, was a very perplexed and winding path running in a very small space over a great deal of ground, called a Miz-Maze. The senior boys obliged the juniors to tread it, to prevent the figure from being lost, and I believe it is still retained." Halliwell, 1856.

The human mortals want their winter cheer;
No night is now with hymn or carol blest:

101. *want . . . cheer;*] *want; . . . here* Knight (Anon. conj.); *chant— . . . here* Grant White conj.; *wail . . . here;* Kinnear conj.; *winter cheer*] Hanmer; *winter heere* Qq, F 1, 2; *winter here* F 3, 4; *winter chear* Theobald conj. (withdrawn); *winters heried* Warburton; *wonted year* Johnson conj.; *summer here* Keightley conj.; *minstrelsy* Hudson.

101. *The human mortals*] It is clear from Titania's reference to the mother of her "changeling," 135, *post*, "she being mortal of that boy did die"; from the First Fairy's address to Bottom, III. i. 177, "Hail, mortal!" Puck's "these mortals" in III. ii. 115, and other passages, that the fairies distinctly considered themselves to be immortal, or at any rate superior to the ills of humanity. Steevens, however, asserted that "fairies were not 'human,' but they were yet 'subject to mortality,' and that 'human' might have been here employed to mark the difference between men and fairies." Ritson, in his *Quip Modest* (1788), rightly maintains against Steevens that the fairies of Shakespeare and the common people were immortal, and were never considered otherwise. This, however, does not explain the true meaning of "human" in this passage, used as a qualifying epithet. I think the qualification has no special reference to the immortality of the fairies as distinguished from the mortality of human beings. Read in the light of the context, it is simply a *compassionate* epithet on Titania's part, and indicates her pity for mortals who are only "human," *i.e.* who are subject to the ills and weaknesses of humanity, and who, owing to her quarrel with Oberon, are, undeservedly, without their usual seasonable "cheer," in an unseasonable time; not being, like Titania and her elemental fairy beings, creatures independent of all "human" ills and their compensating comforts.

101. *want their winter cheer*] So I read, following Theobald's conjecture and Hanmer's reading. Theobald says: "I once suspected it should be 'want their winter chear,' *i.e.* their jollity, usual merry-makings at that season." Capell explains (*Notes*, ii. 104): "That is, their accustomed winter in a country thus afflicted; to wit, a winter enlivened with mirth and distinguished with grateful hymns to their deities." Hudson thinks the next line naturally points out "minstrelsy" as the right correction—a "correction" which is clearly inadmissible. Dyce (ed. 2) says, "'Heere' is proved to be nonsense by the attempts to explain it"; and with this remark I entirely agree. Furness, supporting, as usual, the text of the Folio, thinks the line scarcely needs emendation, and the only solution he can find is to take "here," not in the sense of time, but of place, and he refers to Capell's explanation, above noted, in support of this. I think the true meaning is simply that "mortals" lack the cheer incidental to the real winter season, which of course would be lacking in a summer season, however wintry in its character. Hudson truly remarks that the word "here" in this place gives a sense, if any, out of harmony with the context. Not another word in the whole passage indicates that the effects of the quarrel are other than prevailing over the *whole* earth, and not at all confined to any particular spot: it is "the mazed world" (113), and not merely any particular part, which is the scene of the universal disturbance; and hence the word "here" is without meaning and quite inadmissible.

102. *hymn or carol*] *i.e.* of the Christmas or winter season, without any reference to the "faint hymns" of Act. I. i. 73, chanted "to the cold

Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatic diseases do abound:
And thorough this distemperature we see
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;
And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown,

106. *thorough*] Q 1, F 2, 3; *through* Q 2, F 1, 4. 107. *hoary*] Q 1, F 3, 4; *hoared* Q 2, F 1, 2. 109. *thin*] Halliwell (Tyrwhitt conj.); *chinne* Qq, F 1, 2; *chin* F 3, 4; *chill* Theobald conj.

fruitless moon." The collocation of "moon" in the next line, which introduces a fresh deduction or result from the quarrel, is, I think, accidental, but this is by no means certain.

103. *the moon, the governess of floods*] Cf. "the watery moon," 162, *post*; *Hamlet*, I. i. 119:

"the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands";

Winter's Tale, I. ii. 426:

"you may as well
Forbid the sea for to obey the moon";

and *The Tempest*, V. i. 270, "That could control the moon, make flows and ebbs."

105. *rheumatic*] with the accent on the first syllable, as in *Venus and Adonis*, 135. Malone says that "rheumatic diseases" signified in Shakespeare's time, not what we now call rheumatism, but distillations from the head, catarrhs, etc. Dyce, however, defines the word as "splenetic, humoursome, peevish," referring to *2 Henry IV.* II. iv. 62, "as rheumatic as two dry toasts" ("which cannot meet but they grate one another," Johnson). In Holland's *Pliny*, xix. c. 23, we find: "And these are supposed to be singular for those fluxes and catarrhes which take a course to the belly and breed fluxes, called by the Greeks *Rheumatisms*."

106. *distemperature*] It is possible that this refers proximately to the washing of the air by the moon or the perturbation of the elements (Steevens); but Malone, followed by Wright, refers it to the "brawl" between Oberon and Titania; and I think this latter view is to be preferred. Cf. *Comedy of Errors*, V. i. 81:

"And at her heels a huge infectious troop
Of pale distemperatures and foes to life";

and *Romeo and Juliet*, II. iii. 4, "Thou art uproused by some distemperature." Cf. also *Pericles*, V. i. 27, "Upon what ground is his distemperature?" On the other hand, in *1 Henry IV.* V. i. 3 (referring to the sun), "the day looks pale at his distemperature," the word most probably refers to physical disturbance. The word originally meant—(1) a condition of the air or elements not properly tempered for human health and comfort; (2) a disordered or distempered condition of the body; (3) disturbance of mind or temper.

109. *thin and icy crown*] Theobald, whose instinct was seldom at fault, first suggested "chill" for the "chinne" of the Qq, F 1, 2, and I think rightly; but Tyrwhitt's extremely plausible emendation "thin," *i.e.* "thin-haired," has been almost universally adopted by editors. Cf. the "thin and hairless scalp" of *Richard II.* III. ii. 112. On the other hand, Golding's *Ovid* (Book ii. f. 17,

An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set. The spring, the summer,
The childing autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries; and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which:
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension;
We are their parents and original.

Obe. Do you amend it then; it lies in you:
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman.

Tita Set your heart at rest,
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votaress of my order:
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side;
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,

112. *childing*] *chiding* Pope. 113. *mazed*] *amazed* Rowe. 114. *increase*] *inverse* Hanmer, *inchase* Warburton. 115. *evils comes*] F 2, 3; *euils, comes* Qq, F 1; *evil comes* F 4. 122. *The fairy*] *Thy fairy* Collier (ed. 2). 123. *votaress*] *votresse* Qq, Ff.

ed. 1587), a favourite book of Shakespeare's, contains a description of winter with his "snowie frozen crown." The double epithet, therefore, of "chill and icy" is not out of place or merely tautological; and I think the *ductus literarum* rather supports the reading "chill." The point of the epithets seems to lie rather in the *coldness* of old Hiems' scalp than in its want of covering.

112. *childing*] 1. That which bears a child, pregnant: "The childing or bearing woman," Foxe, *A. & M.* (1596), 106, 1. 2. "Fertile," "fruitful"; *frugifer autumnus*, Steevens, Dyce. Knight quotes

"The 'teeming autumn' big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,"

of the 97th *Sonnet*. See the *New Eng. Dict.*, *s.v.*, for citations in support of these meanings.

113. *mazed*] confused, bewildered

114. *increase*] the natural products of each season; see 110, *ante*.

115. *progeny of evils*] See Introduction on the Date of Composition.

121. *henchman*] Sherwood's *Fr.-Eng. Dict.*, appended to Cotgrave, gives: "A hench-man, or hench-boy. Page d'honneur, qui marche devant quelque Seigneur de grand authoritie."

Marking the embarked traders on the flood;
When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive,
And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind;
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait,
Following,—her womb then rich with my young squire,—
Would imitate, and sail upon the land,
To fetch me trifles, and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake do I rear up her boy:
And for her sake I will not part with him.

Obe. How long within this wood intend you stay?

Tita. Perchance, till after Theseus' wedding-day.
If you will patiently dance in our round,
And see our moonlight revels, go with us;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

Obe. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

Tita. Not for thy fairy kingdom.—Fairies, away!

127. *on*] Qq, F 1, 2; *of* F 3, 4. 130. *gait*] Capell; *gate* Qq, Ff. 131. *Following,—her . . . squire,—*] *Following* (*her wombe . . . squire*) Qq, Ff; *Follying* (*her . . . squire*) Theobald (Warburton); (*Following her womb, . . . squire*) Steevens, Kenrick conj.; *Having her womb . . .* Cartwright conj. 136. *do I*] *doe I* Q 1, *I do* Ff. 144. *fairy*] omitted Steevens, 1793 (Farmer conj.); *Fairies*] *Elves* Pope.

130. *swimming*] perhaps refers to a gliding motion on the water, but more probably to a graceful motion in dancing. There are numerous references in the old dramatists to a step called the swim. See Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, II. i.

131. *Following*] It is surprising to find Theobald and Hanmer following Warburton in his fantastic reading "follying," meaning "wantoning in sport and gaiety." "Kenrick's repulsive punctuation" (Furness) removes the excellent parentheses of the Folio, and puts a comma after "womb"; and many good editors adopt this.

140. *round*] what is now called the country-dance. Cf. Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, I. vi. 7:

"A troupe of Faunes and Satyres far away,
Within the wood were dauncing in a rownd."

144. *fairy*] Cf. 58, *ante*.

We shall chide downright, if I longer stay. 145
[*Exit Titania with her train.*

Obe. Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove,
Till I torment thee for this injury.
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememberest
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back, 150
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song;
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music.

Puck. I remember.

Obe. That very time I saw, but thou couldst not, 155
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took

145. [Exit . . .] Exeunt. Qq, Ff; Exeunt Queen and her Train Theobald. 149. *once I*] Qq, F 1; / F 2, 3, 4; *that* / Rowe. 155. *saw*] Q 1; *say* Q 2, Ff. 157. *all arm'd*] *alarm'd* Theobald (Warburton).

147. *injury*] here "insult." Cf. Injurious Hermia, "insulting," III. ii. 195.

148–168.] According to Rowe, the allusions in this celebrated passage amount to no more than a compliment to Queen Elizabeth. In his *Life of Shakespear* (1709), p. 8, Rowe says that "Queen Elizabeth had several of [Shakespear's] plays acted before her, and without doubt gave him many gracious marks of her favour. It is that maiden Princess, plainly, whom he intends by a 'fair vestal throned by the west'; and that whole passage is a compliment very properly brought in and very handsomely applied to her." The historical, or supposed historical, allusions are considered in the Introduction, pp. xliv *sqq.*

149. *Since*] when. Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, Ind. i. 84, and *Winter's Tale*, v. i. 219. Verity, perhaps rightly, thinks "since" is used by Shakespeare as equivalent to "when" only after verbs denoting recollection.

151. *breath*] *i.e.* the singing voice. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, II. iii. 22, "so sweet a breath to sing"; *Venus and Adonis*, 429, "Thy mermaid's voice hath done me double wrong"; and *Lucrece*, 1411, "As if some mermaid did their ears entice."

153. *certain*] Here used of an indefinite number, as in *The Tempest*, v. i. 53, "Bury it certain fathoms in the earth." Wright. Schmidt, *Lexicon*, quotes *Lucrece*, 1525, "And little stars shot from their fixed places." The meaning of "fixed," "sure," appears to be preferable in this passage, especially as we have "certain" occurring in the latter sense in "a certain aim," 157, *infra*.

157. *all arm'd*] "all" here is merely emphatic—"not in full armour, but

At a fair vestal, throned by the west;
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon;
And the imperial votaress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.
Fetch me that flower; the herb I shew'd thee once:
The juice of it, on sleeping eyelids laid,
Will make or man or woman madly dote

158. *the*] Ff, omitted Qq. 160. *should*] *would* F 4. 162. *Quench'd*] *Quench* F 3, 4. 163. *votaress*] *votresse* Qq, Ff. 169. *shew'd*] *shewed* Q 1.

with all his usual weapons" (Wright), *i.e.* of bow and quiver. "The perverse and ingenious Warburton" reads "alarm'd," on the supposition that the beauty of the passage would be heightened if Cupid were represented as frightened at Queen Elizabeth's declaration for a single life. The marvel is that this perversity seems to have been approved by Theobald.

158. *by*] here used in a sense approaching its original meaning of "near."

159. *loosed*] the technical term in archery for the delivery of an arrow. See Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, p. 145. "Th' Archer's terme, who is not said to finish the feate of his shot before he give the loose, and deliuer his arrow from his bow."

159. *smartly*] *i.e.* sharp and hard. See Rushton's admirable little volume, *Shakespeare an Archer*, 1897, p. 47.

163. *votaress*] 123, *ante*.

167. *Before milk-white*] Unless the fancy is Shakespeare's own, it is quite possible, as Hunter (i. 293) thinks, that the change of the pansy from white to purple was suggested by the change of the mulberry in Ovid's *Story of Pyramus*. Shakespeare was a close student of Ovid.

168. *love-in-idleness*] The *viola tricolor*, more commonly called pansy or heartsease, and many other names. Gerard, in his *Herbal* (1577), p. 785, says it is called "in English Hartsease, Pansies, *Love in Idleness*, Cull me to you, and three faces in a hood." Lyte, in his *Nievve Herball* (1578), part ii. ch. ii., *Of Pances or Hartes Ease*, says, p. 149: "This floure is called . . . in Latine . . . viola tricolor, Herba Trinitatis, Jacea, and Herba Clauellata: in English Pances, Loue in idlenes and Heartes Ease." Ellacombe, *Plant Lore and Garden Craft of Shakespeare*, 1878, p. 151, has added from Dr. Prior more common names, such as "Herb Trinity, Fancy, Kiss me, Cull me or cuddle me to you, Tickle my fancy, Kiss me ere I rise, Jump up and kiss me, Kiss me at the garden gate, Pink of my John," etc.

Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb: and be thou here again,
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

Puck. I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes. [*Exit.*

Obe. Having once this juice,
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:
The next thing then she waking looks upon,
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,
She shall pursue it with the soul of love.
And ere I take this charm from off her sight,
As I can take it with another herb,
I'll make her render up her page to me.

175, 176.] *I'll . . . minutes*] as in Pope; one line in Qq; prose in Ff. 175. *I'll*] *I'ld* Collier, *I'd* Hudson; *round*] Q 1; omitted Q 2, Ff. 177. *when*] *whence* Q 2. 179. *then*] Q 1; *when* Q 2, Ff; *which* Rowe. 181. *On meddling*] *Or meddling* Rowe. 183. *from off*] *from of* Q 1; *off from* Q 2, Ff.

174. *leviathan*] "The margins of the bibles in Shakespeare's day explained leviathan as a whale." Wright.

175. *girdle*] Cf. George Chapman's *Bussy d'Ambois*, 1607, I. i.:

"In tall ships richly built and ribbed with brass,
To put a girdle round about the world."

"This metaphor is not peculiar to Shakespeare. The idea and expression were probably derived from the old plans of the world, in which the Zodiac is represented as 'a girdle round about the earth.'" Halliwell. Staunton says the phrase seems to have been a proverbial mode of expressing a voyage round the world, and quotes Shirley's *Humourous Courtier*, I. i.: "Thou hast been a traveller and convers'd With the Antipodes, almost put a girdle About the world."

176. *forty*] used very frequently as an indefinite number, which probably took its rise from scriptural sources. Cf. the forty days and forty nights of the Deluge, the wanderings of the Israelites for forty years, etc. And *Sonnets*, ii., "When forty winters shall besiege thy brow" (though the usage here is not perhaps indefinite), and *Coriolanus*, III. i. 243, "I could beat forty of them." Forty pence was a customary amount for a wager. Cf. *Henry VIII.* II. iii. 89, "How tastes it? is it bitter? forty pence, no." Cf. "Forty winks," a short nap.

178. *drop the liquor*] See the Introduction, xliii; and cf. "streak" and "anoint," 257 and 261; "latch'd," III. ii. 36; and "crush this herb," III. ii. 366, *post*.

But who comes here? I am invisible;
And I will over-hear their conference.

Enter DEMETRIUS, HELENA *following him.*

Dem. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
The one I 'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stol'n unto this wood;
And here am I, and wood within this wood,
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.
Hel. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;

188. *Scene III.*] Pope. 190. *slay . . . slayeth*] Theobald (Thirlby conj.); *stay . . . stayeth* Qq, Ff. 191. *unto*] Qq, *into* Ff. 192. *wood . . . wood*] Q 2, Ff; *wodde, . . . wood* Q 1; *wode . . . wood* Hanmer. 193. *my*] *with* Malone. 194. *thee*] *the* Q 1.

186. *I am invisible*] "As Oberon and Puck may be frequently observed to speak when there is no mention of their entering, they are designed by the poet to be supposed on the stage during the greatest part of the remainder of the play, and to mix, as they please, as spirits, with the other actors, without being seen or heard, but when to their own purpose." Theobald. Collier (ed. 2) says: "Among the 'properties' enumerated in Henslowe's *Diary* is 'a robe for to go invisible.' Possibly Oberon wore, or put on, such a robe, by which it was understood that he was not to be seen."

190. *slay . . . slayeth*] Thirlby's excellent emendation, adopted by Theobald and almost all subsequent editors, for the "stay" and "stayeth" of the Qq and Ff. For the word itself, cf. the song in *Twelfth Night*, II. iv. 55, "I am slain by a fair cruel maid"; and for the sanguinary designs of Demetrius with regard to Lysander, see III. ii. 64, where he says to Hermia, "I had rather give his carcase to my hounds"; cf. also III. ii. 257.

192. *wood . . . wood*] a play upon words, of a sort, as is indicated by the reading of Q 2 and the Ff; "wood" meaning mad, enraged; Anglo-Saxon *wod*, mad, and German *wuth*, rage. The difference in meaning is perhaps more clearly shown by the spelling "wode" adopted by Hanmer, Capell, and the Cambridge editors, though it is doubtful whether there was any distinction in pronunciation. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 740, "Life poisoning pestilence and frenzies wood." See also Chaucer's *C. T.*, Prologue, 184 (of the Monk), "What sholde he studie and make hym-selven wood"; and 636 (of the Somonour), "Thanne wolde he speke and crie as he were wood."

195. *adamant*] formerly identified with the magnet or loadstone, and originally a name for the hardest metal, probably "steel"; being used in Latin poetically for the hardest iron or steel, or anything very hard and indestruct-

But yet you draw not iron, for my heart
Is true as steel: leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.
Dem. Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair?
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you, I do not nor I cannot love you?
Hel. And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,

196. *for*] *though* Lettsom conj. 197. *you*] omitted F 3, 4. 201. *nor*] Ff, *not* Qq, *and* Pope. 202. *you*] Q 1; *thee* Q 2, Ff.

ible; also, in Pliny, the name of a transparent crystalline gem, probably white sapphire; and at length transferred to the still harder "diamond"; which name is a modern corruption of adamant, through the French *diamant*. Craig remarks: "Shakespeare may have used the word in the sense of loadstone, with a play on the other sense of adamant, *i.e.* what Burns would call 'hard whun-rock'; or else he may use it in the sense of a hard rock which draws to it ships to their destruction"; and he refers to Lord Berners's translation of *Huon of Burdeaux*, ca. cviii. E.E. Text Soc., ed. Sidney Lee (1883), p. 369: "for yf god had not had petye of them they were all lykely to haue ben lost for the plase that they sawe a farre of was a castell, and therein closyd the rock of the Adamant: the which castell was daungerous to aproche for yf enye shyppe come nere it and haue any Iron nayles within it, and a shyppe come within the syght thereof, the Adamant wyll drawe the shyppe to hym." See also Edward Fenton's *Certaine Secrete Wonders of Nature*, 1569: "There is now a dayes a kind of *adamant* which draweth unto it fleshe, and the same so strongly, that it hath power to knit and tie together two mouthes of contrary persons and drawe the heart of a man out of his bodie without offending any part of him."

196, 197. *But yet . . . steel*] "There is no need of change if we take 'draw not' in the sense of the opposite of drawing, namely, of repulsion, which is not logical, it must be granted, but then Helena was not logical; 'you are,' she says in effect, 'adamant only as far as I am concerned; you repel iron, as is shown by your repelling my heart, which is true steel'; or there may have been the image in Helena's mind of a piece of lodestone, such as all of us have often seen, encrusted with bits of iron, which have been drawn to it, and she says to Demetrius, in effect, 'You do not draw iron, because, if you did, my heart, which is the truest steel, would be close to your heart, and I should be folded in your arms.'" Furness. "In drawing (attracting) my heart you draw that which for its trueness is very steel." Verity. "The point seems to be, 'you draw my heart as adamant draws iron; yet, though my heart be true as steel, it is not in other respects like iron, *i.e.* it is not hard.'" Chambers.

203. *spaniel*] Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, III. i. 43, "base spaniel fawning."

Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love
(And yet a place of high respect with me)
Than to be used as you use your dog?
Dem. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick when I do look on thee.
Hel. And I am sick when I look not on you.
Dem. You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city, and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not;
To trust the opportunity of night,
And the ill counsel of a desert place,
With the rich worth of your virginity.
Hel. Your virtue is my privilege for that.
It is not night when I do see your face,
Therefore I think I am not in the night;
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company,
For you, in my respect, are all the world:
Then how can it be said I am alone,
When all the world is here to look on me?

206. *lose*] *loose* Q 1. 210. *use*] Qq, *doe* Ff, *do use* Reed; *dog?*] *dogge.* Q 1, F 1; *dog.* Q 2. 220, 221. *privilege for that. It is*] Malone (Tyrwhitt conj.), *privilege: for that It is* Qq, Ff.

220. *privilege for that*] "Tyrwhitt's punctuation, which makes 'that' refer to Helena's leaving the city, has been adopted by all the best editors down to Staunton, who returned to the punctuation of the Qq, Ff. Staunton has a respectable following in the Cambridge editors." Furness. I think, however, that "that" refers simply to "virginity," and not so much to her leaving the city. The reproaches of Demetrius refer specifically to—(1) "the opportunity of night," (2) "a desert place," (3) her "virginity." Helena's replies were equally specific, though in the inverse order: *i.e.* (3) his virtue is the guardian of her virginity, (2) it is not night when she sees his face, (1) the wood is not a desert place and lacks not company, Demetrius being all the world to her.

224. *in my respect*] *i.e.* as I regard it. Cf. *Cymbeline*, II. iii. 140, "His meanest garment . . . is dearer in my respect."

Dem. I 'll run from thee, and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.
Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will, the story shall be changed;
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tiger: bootless speed,
When cowardice pursues, and valour flies.
Dem. I will not stay thy questions; let me go:
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.
Hel. Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!

235. *questions*] *question* Dyce, ed. 2 (Steevens conj.). 238. *Ay*] Rowe; *I* Qq, Ff; *the field*] Q 1; *and field* Q 2, Ff.

231.] The story of the flight of Daphne Shakespeare found in Ovid, *Metam.* i. 452–552. See 167, *ante*, and Ellacombe, *Plant Lore of Shakespeare*, p. 268.

232. *griffin*] Herodotus, iv. 13 and 27, mentions the wars for gold between the one-eyed people the Arimaspians and the gold-guarding griffins—'Αριμασπούς ἄνδρας μουνοφθάλμους, ὑπὲρ δὲ τούτων τοὺς χρυσοφύλακας γρῦπας. Craig refers to an entertaining account of this fabulous monster in Lord Berners's *Huon of Burdeaux* (Lee, E. Eng. Text Ed., part ii. p. 425, c. xxx.), "How Huon was borne by a gryffon out of the castell of Adamant, and how he slew the gryffon . . . Huon beheld him and sawe howe he was a crewell fowle. His becke was maruaylously grete, his eyen as great as a basyn, and more redder than the mouth of a fornays, and his talantys so great and so longe that ferful it was to beholde hym." Way (*Promptorium Parvulorum*, 1865, *s.v.* Grype, footnote) says: "This fabulous animal is particularly described by Sir John Maundevile, in his account of Bacharie, 'In that contree ben many griffounes, more plentee than in any other contree. Sum men seyn that thei hau the body upward as an Eagle, and benethe as a lyoune, and treuly thei seyn sothe that thei ben of that schapp. But a griffoun hathe the body more gret, and is more strong thanne viij lyouns, of such lyouns as ben of this half, and more gret and strongere than an c. egles, suche as we hau amonges us.'" See also Holland's *Pliny*, x. 49, "As for the foules called Pegasi, headed like horses; and the griffons, which are supposed to have long eares and a hooked bill, I take them to bee meere fables." See also the references in Phipson's *Animal Lore of Shakespeare's Time*, 1883, p. 460, *s.v.*

235. *questions*] Steevens thought it not impossible that Shakespeare here wrote "question," *i.e.* discourse, conversation. Cf. *As You Like It*, III. iv. 39, "I met the duke yesterday, and had much question with him."

Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.
[*Exit Dem*
I 'll follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well. [*Exit Hel*

Obe. Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave this grove,
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love.—

Re-enter PUCK.

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck. Ay, there it is.

Obe. I pray thee, give it me.
I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows;

242 [Exit Dem.] omitted Qq, Ff. 243. *I'll*] *Ile* Qq, *I* Ff. 244. [Exit Hel.] Exit. Q 2, Ff; omitted Q 1. 246. *Scene IV.*] Pope. Re-enter Puck] Capell; Enter Pucke Qq, Ff (after line 247). 248. *there*] *here* Hudson (Lettsom conj.). 249. *whereon*] Pope; *where* Qq, Ff. 250. *oxlips*] Q 1; *Oxslips* Q 2, Ff; *the oxslips* Rowe; *oxslip* Pope; *oxlip* Theobald. *oxlips . . . violet*] *violets . . . ox-lip* Keightley.

242.] For the sentiment, see *Titus Andronicus*, II. i. 82, "She is a woman, therefore may be woo'd"; and *1 Henry VI.* v. iii. 77, "She's beautiful, and therefore to be woo'd."

244. *upon the hand*] almost equivalent to "by the hand," combined with the idea of local proximity to the object. See II. ii. 106, "to perish on my sword." "Upon" seems to mean "in consequence of" in *Much Ado*, IV. i. 225, "When he shall hear she died upon his words"; and V. i. 258, "And fled is he upon this villany."

249. *whereon*] Pope's sensible reading for the halting "where" of the Qq, Ff, which is followed by many editors. Critics there are who, like Malone, consider the word a disyllable; or, like White (ed. 1), as having "a disyllabic quantity" (whatever that may mean); or, like Furness, fancy that "a pause before *where* takes the place of a syllable." I entirely decline to believe that Shakespeare wrote "where." If we assume the date 1594 for the composition of this play, and if we remember that *Venus and Adonis* was published the previous year, 1593, we shall discover Pope's "whereon" in line 151 of the poem: "Witness this primrose *bank whereon* I lie." No critic that I am aware of appears to have noticed this, and I think we need look no farther for the true reading.

250. *oxlips*] Cf. *Winter's Tale*, IV. iv. 125, "bold oxlips and The crown imperial." Lyte, *Nievve Herball*, 1578, p. 123: "The oxelip, or the small kinde of white Mulleyn, is very like to

Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania, sometime of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:

251. *Quite*] omitted Pope; *over-canopied*] *ouercanopi'd* Q 1, *ouercanoped* Q 2, *ouer-cannoped* Ff, *O'er-cannopy'd* Pope; *lush*] Steevens, 1793 (Theobald conj.), *luscious* F 1, *lushious* Qq. 253. *sometime*] *some time* Rowe. 254. *these flowers*] *these bowers* Grant White (Collier), *this bower* Hudson (Lettsom conj.); *with*] *from* Hanmer. 256. *wrap*] F 2, 3, 4; *wrappe* Q 1; *rap* Q 2, F 1.

the Cowslippe aforesaid, saving that his leaves be greater and larger, and his floures be of a pale or faynt yellow colour, almost white and without savour." Marshall says: "Oxlips are comparatively rare now in England, at least in a wild state."

250. *grows*] singular, probably by attraction to its nearest subject "violet."

251. *lush*] The reading of Theobald, Steevens, Dyce, and others for the "luscious" of the Folio, and the "lushious" of the Qq: the latter a very significant spelling. As Ritson neatly put it, "lush is clearly preferable in point of sense, and absolutely necessary in point of metre." Cf. *Tempest*, II. i. 52, "How lush and lusty the grass looks!" The conservative instinct of Furness prefers to adhere to the Folio reading, and to treat the line as an Alexandrine.

251. *woodbine*] Lyte, *Nievve Herball*, p. 390: "Woodbine or Honysuckle hath many small branches, whereby it windeth and wrappeth it selfe about trees and hedges . . . Woodbine groweth in all this Countrie in hedges, about inclosed feeldes, and amongst broome or firres. It is founde also in woodes . . . This herbe, or kinde of Bindweede, is called . . . in Englishe Honysuckle, or Woodbine, and of some Caprifoyle." See IV. i. 44, *post*.

252. *musk-roses*] Gerarde, *Herbal* (1597), 1086, says: "The musk-rose was called *Rosa moschata*, of the smell of muske; in Italian, *Rosa moschetta*; in French, *Roses musques*, or *muscadelles*." Gerarde describes it as being of a white colour, "with certaine yellow seedes in the middle," and says that it is of most writers reckoned among the Wilde Roses. Craig refers to Bacon's Essay, "Of Gardens," where he says: "that which, above all others, yields the *Sweetest Smell* in the *Air*, is the Violet, . . . Next to that is the Musk Rose." See Ellacombe, *Plant Lore of Shakespeare*, *s.v.*

252. *eglantine*] the sweet-brier. Cotgrave: "Aiglantier: m. An *Eglentine*, or sweet-brier tree." Cf. *Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 223, "the leaf of eglantine." Gerarde, p. 1088, says: "The Eglantine Rose . . . a kinde of Dogs Rose . . . in English Eglantine or Sweet Brier." And see Ellacombe, *supra*. Milton's imitation of this passage is well known.

253. *sometime of the night*] a partitive genitive, with the sense of "during." Cf. *Hamlet*, I. v. 60, "my custom always of the afternoon." And see Abbott, § 176.

255, 256.] Keightley, *Expositor*, 1867, transposes these two lines, so as to follow 252, and the change has been adopted by Hudson, reading "where" for "there."

256. *Weed*] a garment.

And with the juice of this I 'll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes;
But do it, when the next thing he espies
May be the lady. Thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care; that he may prove
More fond on her, than she upon her love:
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

Puck. Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another part of the Wood.*

Enter TITANIA, *with her train.*

Tita. Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song;
Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;

257. *And*] *There* Hanmer, *Now* Lettsom conj., *Then* Keightley. 266. *fond on*] *fond of* Rowe; *her love*] *his love* Hanmer. 268. [Exeunt] Qq, Exit Ff.

Scene II.

Scene II.] Capell, *Scene V.* Pope, *Scene III.* Steevens; Theobald continues the Scene. Another part of the Wood] Capell. Enter . . .] Enter Tytania, Queene of Fairies, with her traine Q 1; Enter Queene of Fairies, with her traine Q 2, F 1. 2. *for*] *'fore* Theobald, Hudson; *in* Heath conj.; *ere* Hudson conj.; *fly* Kinnear conj.; *a minute*] *the midnight* Warburton.

263, 264. *man . . . on*] Shakespeare frequently rhymes a short "a" with a short "o," and probably to his ear the rhyme was reasonably correct. See this rhyme repeated in III. ii. 348, 349, and the earlier instances of "crab" and "bob" in lines 48 and 49, and "cough" and "laugh" in lines 54 and 55 of this scene. Steevens may be nearer the mark when he says: "I desire no surer evidence to prove that the broad Scotch pronunciation once prevailed in England, than such a rhyme as the first of these words affords to the second." Wright assumes the rhymes are imperfect, and thinks it unsafe to draw any inference as to Shakespeare's pronunciation. I am inclined to think that the "o" had the sound of the "a," and not *vice versâ*.

266. *fond on*] Cf. *Sonnets*, lxxxiv. 14, "being fond on praise."

Scene II.

1. *roundel*] Cf. "round," II. i. 140, and note on line 8, *infra*.

2. *the third part of a minute*] Halliwell says: "This quaint subdivision of

Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds;
Some war with rere-mice for their leathern wings,
To make my small elves coats; and some keep back
The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots and wonders
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices, and let me rest.

SONG.

Fir. Fairy. You spotted snakes, with double tongue,
Thorny hedge-hogs, be not seen;
Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong;
Come not near our fairy queen:

7. *spirits*] *sports* Hanmer (Warburton); *Sing*] *Come, sing* Hanmer. 9. Song. Fir. Fairy] Capell; Fairies Sing. Qq, Ff.

time exactly suits the character of the speaker and her diminutive world."

3. *cankers*] Formerly often the same as "cancer," meant originally a spreading sore or ulcer, then a disease of plants, especially fruit-trees, and was probably also applied to any destructive caterpillar or insect larva which destroys the buds and leaves of plants. See *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I. i. 43, 46, "the eating canker"; *Romeo and Juliet*, II. iii. 30, "the canker death"; *Venus and Adonis*, 656, "This canker that eats up Love's tender spring"; and *Hamlet*, I. iii. 39, "The canker galls the infants of the spring."

4. *rere-mice*] bats. Anglo-Saxon, hrére-mus, from "hreran," to stir, agitate; hence "flittermouse," the old name for the bat.

6. *clamorous owl*] Cf. *Macbeth*, II. iii. 65:

"the obscure bird
Clamoured the live-long night."

8.] Capell divided the fairies' song into two stanzas of four lines each, with a chorus of six lines. The stanzas comprise the song called for by Titania, and the chorus is the "roundel" which was at once song and dance, like that of the "Merryman and his Maid" in W. S. Gilbert's *Yeomen of the Guard*.

11. *Newts*] an ewt or eft (Anglo-Saxon, "efete"), the "n" of the indefinite article being attached in pronunciation to the following word, as in "nonce" and other words. Edward Topsell, *Historie of Foure-footed Beastes*, 1608, p. 212: "Of the Nevte or *Water Lizard*. This is a little blacke Lizard, called *Wassermoll* or *Wasseraddex*, that is, a Lizard of the Water . . . They liue in standing water or pooles, as in ditches of Townes and Hedges . . . There is nothing in nature that so much offendeth it as salt, for so soon as it is layde vpon salt, it endeauoureth with all might and maine to runne away . . . Beeing moued to anger, it standeth upon the hinder legges, and looketh directlie in the face of him that hath stirred it, and so continueth till all the body be white, through a kind of white humour or poyson, that it swelleth outward, to harme (if it were possible) the person that did prouoke it." The creatures are of course perfectly harmless, but the text expresses not only the belief of the common people, but of

CHORUS.

Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby:
Never harm, nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh:
So, good night, with lullaby.

Fir. Fairy. Weaving spiders, come not here;
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence:

13, 23. Chorus] Capell; omitted Qq, Ff. 14. *in our*] Qq, *in your* Ff. 19. Fir. Fairy] 1 Fai. Q 1, 1 Fairy Q 2, 2 Fairy Ff. 20. *spinners*] Q 1, Ff; *spinders* Q 2.

the naturalists of the time. Cf. *Macbeth*, IV. i. 14, "Eye of newt and blind-worm's sting."

11. *blind-worms*] Topsell, p. 239: "*Of the Slovv-Worme.* This serpent was called in auncient time among the Grecians *Tythlops* and *Typhlines*, and *Cophia*, because of the dimnes of the sight thereof, and the deafenes of the eares and hearing . . . It beeing most euident that it receiueth name from the blindnes and deafenes thereof, for I haue often proued, that it neither heareth nor seeth here in England, or at the most it seeth no better than a Mole . . . It is harmless except being prouoked, yet many times when an oxe or a cow lieth down in the pasture, if it chaunce to lie upon one of these slovv-wormes, it byteth the beast, and if remedy be not had, there followeth mortality or death, for the poyson thereof is very strong."

13. *melody*] pronounced with the sound of "ei," so as to make a perfect rhyme with "lullaby." See I. i. 189, and II. ii. 77, *post*, where "kill-courtesy" rhymes to "lie," and 57, where "courtesy" rhymes to "modesty."

19. *spiders*] also thought to be poisonous. Cf. *Richard II.* II. i. 14, "Thy spiders that suck up thy venom." Lyly's *Euphues* (ed. Arber), 100: "Is not poyson taken out of the Hunny-suckle by the Spider? venym out of the Rose by the Cancker?" Topsell, p. 246: "All spyders are venomous, but yet some more, and some lesse. Of spyders that neyther doe nor can doe much harme, some of them are tame, familiar, and domesticall, and these be cōmonly the greatest among the whole packe of them. Others againe be meere wilde, liuing without the house abroade in the open ayre, which by reason of their rauenous gut, and greedy deuouring maw, have purchased to thēselues the name of wolfes and hunting spyders." Craig says: "It is constantly stated in Elizabethan writers that there are no spiders in Ireland, and that if you touch a spider with a piece of Irish wood it will die."

20. *spinners*] spiders. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, I. iv. 59 (of Mab), "Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs"; and Latimer in Fox's *Acts and Monuments*, "Where the bee gathereth honey, even there the spinner gathereth venome." Craig refers to Fitzherbert's *Book of Husbandrie* (Pynson, 1523, ed. Skeat, p. 51), "And also there wyll be many Kells upon the grass" [and the 1598 edition adds] "like to Spinners

Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm, nor snail, do no offence.

CHORUS.

Philomel, with melody, etc.

Sec. Fairy. Hence, away! now all is well:
One, aloof, stand sentinel.

[*Exeunt Fairies.* *Titania sleeps*

Enter OBERON.

Obe. What thou seest, when thou dost wake,
[*Squeezes the flower on Titania's eyelids.*
Do it for thy true love take;
Love and languish for his sake:
Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar with bristled hair,
In thy eye that shall appear
When thou wak'st, it is thy dear;
Wake, when some vile thing is near. [*Exit.*

Enter LYSANDER *and* HERMIA.

Lys. Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way:
We 'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Her. Be it so, Lysander: find you out a bed;
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

24. Sec. Fairy] 2 Fai. Qq, 1 Fairy Ff. 25. [Exeunt Fairies] Rowe; omitted Qq, Ff; Titania sleeps] Shee sleepes F 1, omitted Qq; Enter . . . eyelids] Capell; Enter Oberon Qq, Ff. 31. *that*] *what* Pope. 33. [Exit] Rowe; omitted Qq, Ff. 34. *Scene VI.*] Pope; *wood*] Q 1; *woods* Q 2, Ff.

webs"; and to Chapman's *Widow's Tears*, IV. iii., "for women are a kind of spinners: if their legs be plucked of, they will wag them, so will you your tongues." Cotgrave has: "Araigne: A spider, a spinner."

Lys. One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.
Her. Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear,
Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.
Lys. O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence!
Love takes the meaning in love's conference.
I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit;
So that but one heart we can make of it:
Two bosoms interchained with an oath;
So, then, two bosoms and a single troth.
Then, by your side no bed-room me deny;
For, lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.
Her. Lysander riddles very prettily:
Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,
If Hermia meant to say, Lysander lied.
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy
Lie further off; in human modesty

42. *good*] *god* Q 1. 44, 45. *innocence! . . . conference*] *conference; . . . innocence* Theobald, ed. 1 (Warburton). 45. *conference*] *confidence* Collier, ed. 2. 47. *we can*] Qq, *can you* Ff, *can we* Capell. 48. *interchained*] Qq, *interchanged* Ff. 56. *off; in . . . modesty,*] Theobald; *off, in . . . modesty:* Q 1; *off, in . . . modesty,* Q 2, F 1, 2; *off in . . . modesty,* F 3, 4.

45. *Love . . . conference*] *i.e.* "Love puts a good construction on all that is said and done in the 'conference' or intercourse of love." Lettsom (*Blackwood's Magazine*), 1853.

48. *interchained*] So Qq, and perhaps this reading is more forcible than the "interchanged" of the Ff. On the other hand, R. G. White (ed. 1) thinks that "interchained" of the Qq conveys the comparatively commonplace thought that the lovers' hearts were bound together; "interchanged" represents them as having been given each to the other, as the most solemn instruments are made, interchangeably. One possible objection to the reading of the Qq is that it does not seem to be used by any other writer; and it will be remembered that "interchanged" is used before by Shakespeare in I. i. 29, "interchanged love tokens." Marshall adopts "interchained" on the ground that "it is more consonant in sense with line 46—'my heart unto yours is *knit*'; and that 'bosom,' though used as 'desire' (*Measure for Measure*, IV. iii. 139), or as 'inmost thoughts' (*Othello*, III. i. 58), seems never to be used for 'the affections' themselves. Shakespeare could scarcely have said 'we have *interchanged* bosoms.' The objection to 'interchained' is," Marshall further says, "not that it occurs only in this passage, but that it is not to be found in any other writer, ancient or modern, so far as I can discover."

Such separation as may well be said,
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid:
So far be distant; and good night, sweet friend:
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end!

Lys. Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;
And then end life, when I end loyalty!
Here is my bed: sleep give thee all his rest!

Her. With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd!

[*They sleep.*

Enter PUCK.

Puck. Through the forest have I gone,
But Athenian found I none,
On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love.
Night and silence!—who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear:
This is he, my master said,
Despised the Athenian maid;
And here the maiden, sleeping sound,
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul! she durst not lie
Near this lack-love kill-courtesy.

66. *found*] Q 1; *finde* Q 2, Ff. 76. *Near this lack-love kill-courtesy*] Johnson; *Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy* F 1; *Near to this lack-love, this kill-courtesie* Pope; *Near to this kill-curtesie* Theobald; *Near to this lack-love kill-courtesie* Warburton; *Near this lack-love, kill-courtesy* Steevens (1785, 1793); *Nearer this lack-love, this kill-courtesy* Dyce (Walker conj.).

67. *approve*] Cf. "approvers," *i.e.* those who put to the proof, *Cymbeline*, II. iv. 25.

70. *Weeds*] See II. i. 264.

76. *Near this lack-love kill-courtesy*] This, the reading of Johnson, is the only tolerable reading. The editors almost universally appear to take "lack-love" as a substantive. I believe it is here used as an adjective, and I think the compositor introduced the second "this" into the line from a misconception of this fact. The expression is, I think, almost exactly analogous to the "purple-hued malt-worms" of *1 Henry IV.* II. i. 83; cf. also II. iv. 77–80 of that play. The note in Furness affords, in my opinion,

Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe.
When thou wak'st, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid.
So awake when I am gone,
For I must now to Oberon. [*Exit.*

Enter DEMETRIUS *and* HELENA, *running.*

Hel. Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.
Dem. I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.
Hel. O, wilt thou darkling leave me? do not so.
Dem. Stay, on thy peril; I alone will go.
[*Exit.*

Hel. O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;
For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:
If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.
No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;
For beasts that meet me, run away for fear:

83. *Scene* VII.] Pope; *Stay* Qq, F 1; *Say* F 2, 3, 4. 86. [Exit] Exit Demetrius Ff, omitted Qq.

many melancholy examples of misapplied ingenuity and defective "ear" for rhythm.

79, 80. *When . . . eyelid*] *i.e.* forbid sleep to retain his seat, let love banish sleep from his eyes, when he would sleep again. Cf. the well-known passage in *Macbeth*, I. iii. 19:

"Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his penthouse lid."

85. *darkling*] in the dark. Cf. *King Lear*, I. iv. 237, "So out went the candle, and we were left darkling"; and *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV. xv. 10:

"O sun,
Burn the great sphere thou movest in! darkling stand
The varying shore of the world."

87. *fond*] foolish, as often in Shakespeare.

92. *wash'd*] Cf. *Much Ado*, I. i. 27, "there are no faces truer than those that are so washed"; and *King Lear*, I. i. 269, "with wash'd eyes Cordelia leaves you." Craig quotes Cyril Tourneur, *The Atheist's Tragedy*, I. ii. 34, "What, ha' you wash'd your eyes with tears this morning?"

Therefore, no marvel, though Demetrius
Do, as a monster, fly my presence thus.
What wicked and dissembling glass of mine
Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne?
But who is here? Lysander! on the ground!
Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound:
Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

Lys. And run through fire I will, for thy sweet sake.
[*Waking.*

Transparent Helena! Nature shews her art,
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name, to perish on my sword!

Hel. Do not say so, Lysander; say not so:
What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what though?
Yet Hermia still loves you: then be content.

Lys. Content with Hermia! No; I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
Not Hermia, but Helena I love:
Who will not change a raven for a dove?

103. *Helena*] *Helen* Pope; *Nature shews her*] Malone; *Nature her shewes* F 1; *Nature here shews* F 2, 3, 4. 104. *thy heart*] *my heart* Dyce, ed. 2 (Walker conj.). 112. *Helena I love*] Q 1; *Helena now I love* Q 2, Ff; *Helen now I love* Dyce, ed. 2 (Seymour conj.).

98. *sphery*] Cf. Milton's *Comus*, 1021, "Higher than the sphery chime." The meaning appears to be, "Eyes bright as the stars in their spheres."

103. *Nature shews her art*] the reading of Malone, which has been adopted by almost all modern editors. But there is much to be said in favour of the Ff reading, "Nature her [*i.e.* here] shewes art," on the ground that "art" is usually contrasted with "nature," and that the point of Lysander's remark is not otherwise preserved.

104. *thy heart*] Walker, Dyce, and Hudson read "my heart." Cf. *As You Like It*, v. iv. 120:

"That thou mightst join her hand with his
Whose heart within her bosom is."

108. *What though*] What matter. Craig.

113. *Who . . . dove*] Craig compares *Twelfth Night*, v. i. 134, "a raven's heart within a dove."

The will of man is by his reason sway'd;
And reason says you are the worthier maid.
Things growing are not ripe until their season:
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason;
And touching now the point of human skill,
Reason becomes the marshal to my will,
And leads me to your eyes; where I o'erlook
Love's stories, written in love's richest book.

Hel. Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When, at your hands, did I deserve this scorn?
Is 't not enough, is 't not enough, young man,
That I did never, no, nor never can,
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,
In such disdainful manner me to woo.
But fare you well: perforce I must confess,
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.
O, that a lady, of one man refused,
Should of another therefore be abused! [*Exit.*

Lys. She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there;
And never mayst thou come Lysander near!
For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things

117. *ripe not*] *not ripe* Rowe (ed. 2). ed. 2 (S. Walker conj.).

117. *ripe*] ripen, grow riper, as in *As You Like It*, II. vii. 26, "And so from hour to hour we ripe and ripe."

118. *touching . . . skill*] touching the highest point of human discernment.

121. *love's richest book*] Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. iii. 350:

"From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the arts, the academes,
That show, contain, and nourish all the world";

and *Romeo and Juliet*, I. iii. 85:

"And what obscured in this fair volume lies,
Find written in the margent of his eyes."

121. *Love's stories*] *Love-stories* Dyce,

The deepest loathing to the stomach brings;
Or, as the heresies, that men do leave,
Are hated most of those they did deceive;
So thou, my surfeit, and my heresy,
Of all be hated, but the most of me!
And, all my powers, address your love and might,
To honour Helen, and to be her knight! [*Exit.*

Her. [*Awaking.*] Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy best,
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
Ah me, for pity! what a dream was here!
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear:
Methought a serpent eat my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.
Lysander! what, removed? Lysander! lord!
What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?
Alack, where are you? speak, an if you hear;
Speak, of all loves! I swoon almost with fear.

139. *they*] Qq, *that* Ff. 149. *you*] Qq, *yet* Ff. 151. *hearing? gone?*] Capell; *hearing, gone?* Qq, Ff; *hearing gone?* Theobald. 152. *an*] Capell; *and* Qq, Ff. 153. *swoon*] *swoune* Q 1; *swound* Q 2, F 2, 3, 4; *sound* F 1.

148. *eat*] "ate" is the older form of the preterite, but perhaps there was no distinction in pronunciation between the present and the preterite.

153. *of all loves*] meaning, perhaps, "for the sake of all that's loving." Craig. "Of" is used in adjurations and appeals to signify "out of." Cf. *Twelfth Night*, v. i. 237, "Of charity, what kin are you to me?" And the sense of "out of" being lost, it perhaps became equivalent to "for the sake of," "by." For the phrase itself, cf. *Merry Wives*, II. ii. 118, "But Mistress Page would desire you to send her your little page, of all loves"; and *Othello*, III. i. 13, "he desires you, of all loves." Here the Ff reads "for love's sake." Nares furnishes other examples, *e.g.*, *Gammer Gurton's Needle* (1575), v. ii., "For all the loves on earth, Hodge, let me see it"; and Dekker's *Honest Whore* (Dodsley's Old Plays, ii. 76, and iii. 267), "Conjuring his wife, of all loves, to prepare fitting cheer for such honourable trencher-men." Craig refers also to Heywood's *A Woman killed with Kindness*, II. iv. 49, "Of all the loves betwixt thee and me, tell me what thou thinkest of this?" and Bernard's *Terrence in English* (*Eunuchus*), ed. 1607, p. 119, "Of all loves, hearken to this I am telling you."

No? then I well perceive you are not nigh:
Either death, or you, I 'll find immediately. 155
[*Exit.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*The Wood. Titania lying asleep.*

Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, *and* STARVELING.

Bot. Are we all met?

Quin. Pat, pat; and here 's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn brake our tiring-house; and we will do it in action, as we will do it before the duke. 5

Bot. Peter Quince,—

Quin. What say'st thou, bully Bottom?

155. *Either*] *Or* Pope.

Act III. Scene i.

Act III. Scene i.] Rowe; Actus Tertius Ff, omitted Qq. The Wood] Pope. Titania lying asleep] The Queen of Fairies lying asleep Rowe; omitted Qq, Ff. Enter . . .] Rowe; Enter the clownes Qq, Ff. 2. *marvellous*] *maruailes* Q 1; *maruailous* Q 2, Ff; *marvels* Capell. 7. *Quince,*—] Theobald; *Quince?* Q 1, F 2, 3, 4; *quince?* Q 2, F 1.

155. *Either*] See II. i. 32, *ante.*

Act III. Scene i.

2. *marvellous*] "Capell appears to have considered the reading of Q 1 as representing the vulgar pronunciation of 'marvellous,' and he therefore printed it 'marvels' as in IV. i. 26." Cambridge edd.

4. *hawthorn brake*] See 77, *post.*

4. *tiring-house*] attiring-house, dressing room. Craig refers to Rd. Brome's *The Antipodes*, IV. iv., Works (Pearson), 1873, iii. 324:

"*Bar.* Well Tony, I will see thee in this thing,
And 'tis a pretty thing.
Bla. Prethee, good Bab,
Come in, and help me on with 't in our *Tyring-house*,
And helpe the gentlemen, my fellow dancers,
And thou shalt then see all our things and all
Our *properties* and practice to the Musicke."

8. *bully*] Cf. IV. ii. 19, *post*; *The Tempest*, V. i. 238; and *Merry Wives*,

Bot. There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisby, that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?

Snout. By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

Star. I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

Bot. Not a whit: I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue: and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords; and that Pyramus is not killed indeed: and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver. This will put them out of fear.

Quin. Well, we shall have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.—

14. *By'r lakin*] *Berlakin* Q 1; *Berlaken* Q 2, Ff. 17. *device*] *deuise* Q 1. 20, 21. *the more better*] *the better* Rowe (ed. 2), *more better* Pope.

passim. The *New Eng. Dict.*, *s.v.*, says: "Etymology obscure; possibly an adaptation of the Dutch *boel*, 'lover' (of either sex), also 'brother'; earlier also 'friend,' 'kinsman' . . . A term of endearment and familiarity, originally applied to either sex; sweetheart, darling. Later, to men only, implying friendly admiration; good friend, fine fellow, 'gallant.' Often prefixed as a sort of title to the name or designation of the person addressed, as in 'bully Bottom,' 'bully doctor.'" Bale, *Thre Lawes*, 475 (1538):

"Though she be somewhat olde
It is myne owne swete bullye
My muskyne and my mullye."

Italian expressions like "coragio" (*The Tempest*, v. i. 258) were common amongst the tavern wits of Shakespeare's day; why not a Dutch or German one?

14. *By'r lakin*] by our Ladykin, little lady. Cf. *The Tempest*, III. iii. 1. The "Berlakin" of Q 1 and the "Berlaken" of F 1 probably represent the pronunciation of the time. Craig quotes Sir Thomas More (*Works*, 2 vols., Rastell, 1557), vol. ii. p. 849, Apologie, "By our lakens, brothers, husband, quoth she."

14. *parlous*] perilous, excessive, wonderful. Cf. *As You Like It*, III. ii. 45.

18, 19. *seem to say*] Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, II. iv. 11, "An it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem to signify."

25. *eight and six*] the common ballad metre of alternate verses of eight and six syllables. Capell, however, refers

Bot. No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

Star. I fear it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in,—God shield us!—a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to 't.

Snout. Therefore, another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

Bot. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect,—"Ladies,—or, fair ladies,—I would wish you,—or, I would request you,—or, I would entreat you,—not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: no, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are:"—

28. *afeard*] *afraid* Rowe (ed. 2). 30. *yourselves*] Ff, *your selfe* Qq. 34. *to 't*] *toote* Q 1; *to it* Q 2, Ff. 40. *defect*] *deffect* Q 2.

the expression to the number of lines, namely, fourteen, "which is the measure of that time's sonnets; all Shakespeare's are writ in it."

31. *God shield us!*] Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. i. 41, "God shield I should disturb devotion!"

32. *dreadful thing*] Malone finds "an odd coincidence" here between this remark and an incident which happened in Scotland in 1594, at the christening of the eldest son of James I. "While the king and queen were at dinner, a chariot was drawn in by 'a black-moore. This chariot should have been drawne in by a lyon, but because his presence might have brought some feare to the nearest, or that the sights of the lights and the torches might have commoved his tameness, it was thought meete that the Moore should supply that room.'"

33. *fearful wild-fowl*] I think the source of this well-known expression of Bottom's is to be found in Lord Berners's *Huon of Burdeaux*, referred to *ante*, II. i. 232: "Huon beheld him [the gryffon] and sawe howe he was a crewell 'fowle' . . . 'ferful' it was to beholde hym."

44. *of my life*] *i.e.* for my life, for me. Cf. V. i. 225, "'twere pity on my life."

and there, indeed, let him name his name; and tell them plainly, he is Snug the joiner.

Quin. Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things; that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber; for you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moonlight.

Snout. Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

Bot. A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

Quin. Yes, it doth shine that night.

Bot. Why, then you may leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open; and the moon may shine in at the casement.

47. *them*] Qq, *him* Ff. 52. Snout] Sn. Qq, F 1; Snug F 2, 3, 4. 55. Enter Pucke] Ff, omitted Qq. 57. Bot.] Cet. Q 1.

46. *name his name*] Malone thinks it not improbable that Shakespeare meant to allude to a fact which happened in his time at an entertainment exhibited before Queen Elizabeth. It is recorded in a MS. collection of stories entitled *Merry Passages and Jeasts*, MS. Harl. 6395, fol. 36*b*: "There was a spectacle presented to Q: Elizabeth vpon the water, and amongst others Harr. Golding: was to represent Arion vpon the Dolphin's backe, but finding his voice to be very hoarse and vnpleasant when he came to performe it, he teares of his Disguise, and swears he was none of Arion not he, but eene honest Har. Goldingham; which blunt discoverie pleasd the Queene better, then if it had gone through in the right way; yet he could order his voice to an instrument exceeding well." Scott, in his *Kenilworth*, as Knight reminds us, has transferred the story to "honest Mike Lambourne."

54. *calendar*] "The popular almanac of Shakespeare's time was that of Leonard Digges (1575), the worthy precursor of the Moores and the Murphys. He had a higher ambition than these his degenerate descendants; for, while they prophecy only by the day and the week, he prognosticated 'for ever,' as his title-page shows: A Prognostication 'euerlastinge' of right good effect, fruictfully augmented by the auctour, contayning plain, briefe, plesaunte, chosen rules to iudge the Weather by the Sunne, Moone, Starres, Comets, Rainebow, Thunder, Cloudes, with other extraordinarye tokens, not omitting the Aspects of the Planets, with a briefe iudgement, 'for ever,' of Plenty, Lucke, Sickenes, Dearth, Warres, &c., opening also many natural causes worthy to be knowen." Knight.

58. *great chamber*] referring, no doubt, to the large reception-room in Elizabethan houses. Craig compares *Merry Wives*, 1, i. 157, where Slender, speaking of Pistol picking his pocket, says, "Ay, by these gloves, did he, or

Quin. Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moonshine. Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

Snout. You can never bring in a wall. What say you, Bottom?

Bot. Some man or other must present wall: and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin. When you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake; and so every one according to his cue.

67. Snout] Sno. Q 1; Sn. Q 2, F 1; Snu. F 2; Snug F 3, 4. 70. *loam*] *lime* Collier. 71. *and let*] Delius (Collier); *or let* Qq, Ff. 72. *that*] *the* Rowe.

I would I might never come in mine own great chamber again else."

62, 69. *present*] represent. Cf. *The Tempest*, IV. i. 167, "when I presented Ceres" (of Ariel).

71, 72. *and let him*] Dyce thinks, and rightly, that the mistake in the Folio of "or" for "and" was occasioned by "or" having occurred twice before.

77. *brake*] This word is used by English writers—(1) in the sense of fern, bracken; see the *Promptorium Parvulorum* (c. 1440), 47, Brake, herbe or ferme; and Turner, *Herbal* (1562), II. A ij b: "*Felix femina* . . . is the commen ferne or brake which the Norther men call a braken": (2) in the sense of a clump of bushes, brushwood, or briers; a thicket (originally meaning tree stumps or broken branches, and etymologically connected with "break"). See *Mirr. Mag.* (1563), Jane Shore, xviii., "What scratting bryers dogrowe upon such brakes." See also the *New Eng. Dict.*, *s.v.* Craig rather leans to the opinion that in this pasage and in III. ii. 15, "enter'd in a brake," the word bears the first meaning, but the second meaning in II. i. 227, "hide me in the brakes," and III. i. 109, "through brake, through brier." It is doubtful, however, whether Shakespeare really intended any valid distinction.

78. *cue*] in theatrical usage, the con-

Enter PUCK *behind.*

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy queen? 80
What, a play toward! I 'll be an auditor;
An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.
Quin. Speak, Pyramus. Thisby, stand forth.
Bot. "Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,"—
Quin. Odorous, odorous. 85
Bot.—"odours savours sweet:
So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear.

79. *Scene II.*] Pope. Enter Puck behind] Enter Robin Qq, Ff. 82. *too, perhaps*] *to perhappes* Q 1. 84, 86, 105. Bot.] Pyra. or Pyr. Q 1, Pir. Q 2, Ff. 84. *flowers*] *flower* Pope; *of*] *have* Collier (ed. 2); *savours*] *Savour's* Rowe, *savour* Halliwell. 85. *Odorous, odorous*] Collier, *Odours, odorous* Qq, *Odours, odours* Ff. 87. *hath*] *that* Rowe (ed. 1), *doth* Rowe (ed. 2).

cluding word or words of a speech serving as a signal or direction to another actor to enter. See Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, iii. App. xi. 31, "Amen must be answered to the thanksgevyng, not as to a man's q in a playe." Cf. 102, 103 of this scene, and v. i. 184, *post.* Shakespeare, however, sometimes uses the word in the looser or more figurative sense of "the part assigned to one to play at a particular juncture, the proper course to take," *e.g. Merry Wives*, III. ii. 46, "The clock gives me my cue"; III. iii. 39, "Mistress Page, remember you your cue"; *Richard III.* III. iv. 27, "Had not you come upon your cue"; *Hamlet*, II. ii. 587, "Had he the motive and the cue for passion"; and *King Lear*, I. ii. 147, "my cue is villanous melancholy." "The origin of the word is uncertain. It has been taken as = F. *queue*, tail, on the ground that it is the tail or ending of the preceding speech, but no such use of 'queue' has ever obtained in French (where the 'cue' is called *réplique*), and no literal sense of 'queue' or 'cue' leading up to this appears in 16th c. English. On the other hand, in 16th and early 17th c. it is found written *Q*, *q*, *q.*, or *qu*; and it was explained by 17th c. writers as a contraction for some Latin word (*sc. qualis*, *quando*) said to have been used to mark in actors' copies of plays the points at which they were to begin. But no evidence confirming this has been found." *New Eng. Dict.*

81. *a play toward*] Cf. *As You Like It*, v. iv. 35, "There is, sure, another flood toward."

84.] It will be noted that the speeches delivered at this rehearsal do not correspond with those delivered before the Duke. The mere repetition of the rehearsal at the public performance would, no doubt, have been wearisome, as Furness remarks.

84. *odious*] Cf. Dogberry's famous reversal of this blunder in *Much Ado*, III. v. 18, "Comparisons are odorous."

87.] Malone supposes two lines to be lost here.

But, hark, a voice! stay thou but here a whit,
And by and by I will to thee appear,"— [*Exit.*

Puck.—A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here! [*Aside.* *Exit.*

Flu. Must I speak now?

Quin. Ay, marry, must you: for you must understand, he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

Flu. "Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,
Most brisky juvenal, and eke most lovely Jew,
As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire,
I 'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb."

Quin. "Ninus' tomb," man. Why, you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your part at once, cues and all. Pyramus enter; your cue is past; it is, "never tire."

88. *a whit*] Theobald, *a while* Qq, Ff. 89. *appear,*"—] Furness; *appear.* Qq, Ff. [Exit] Qq, Exit Pir. Ff. 90. Puck] Ff, Quin. Qq; —*A*] Furness. [Exit] Capell. 91, 95, 104. Flu.] Thys. or This. or Thisb. Qq, Ff. 92, 100, 106. Quin.] Pet. Qq, Ff. 97. *brisky juvenal*] *brisky juvenile* Rowe (ed. 2), *briskly juvenile* Hanmer. 103. Enter Pyramus] Rowe.

88. *a whit*] Theobald's correction for the "a while" of the Qq, Ff. I think we must have a rhyme to "sweet," corresponding with the rhyme of "hue" with "Jew" in the quatrain of Flute, 95–98, *post.* "Whit," however, in line 17, *ante*, and in every other passage where it occurs in the plays, is used with a negative.

90. Puck] "Note that the Qq have *Quin.*, a serious blunder, whereof the correction adds much to the value which we should attach to the text of F 1. In a modernised text, I think, a period and a dash should close the preceding line, and a dash commence the present, so as to join the two speeches, and make Puck's the continuation, in sense, of Pyramus's: 'And by and by I will to thee appear,— —a stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here!' adds Puck in anticipation of the Ass-head which he was about to apply. I find by a MS. marginal note, that I am herein anticipated by Allen." Furness.

97. *juvenal*] used in the affected or euphuistic sense, and evidently ridiculed by Shakespeare. Cf. the "congruent epitheton" of *Love's Labour's Lost*, I. ii. 8, "my tender juvenal"; and "the juvenal, the prince your master" of *2 Henry IV.* I. ii. 22.

97. *eke*] becoming obsolete in Shakespeare's time, and only used by him in burlesque passages.

Flu. O,—"As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire."

Re-enter PUCK, *and* BOTTOM *with an ass's head.*

Bot. "If I were *true*, fair Thisby, I were only thine:"

Quin. O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted.
Pray, masters! fly, masters! help!
[*Exeunt Quince, Snug, Flute, Snout, and Starveling.*

Puck. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, *through brook*, through bush, through brake, through brier:
Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire;
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn. [*Exit.*

104. Re-enter . . . head] Capell; omitted Qq, Ff. 105. *If I were* true, *fair Thisby*] Editor (Hudson conj.); *If I were fair, Thisby*, Qq, Ff; *If I were, fair Thisby*. Collier (Malone conj.). 107. [Exeunt . . .] omitted Qq, The Clownes all Exit F 1, The Clownes all Exeunt F 2. 108. *about*] *'bout* Dyce, ed. 2 (Walker conj.). 109. *Through bog*, through brook] Lettsom conj., *Through bog, through mire* Johnson conj., *Through bog, through burn* Ritson conj. 113. Enter Piramus with the Asse head] Ff, omitted Qq.

105. *If I were true, fair Thisby,*] Malone proposed to punctuate: "If I were, fair Thisby," meaning, presumably, "if I were *true*." Bottom's words are spoken in reply to Thisby's "As true as truest horse," etc. Hudson points out that the verse is remarkably regular throughout the interlude; and the reading of the Qq, Ff is evidently not so, but it is commonly retained on the supposition of its being a blunder of Bottom's.

108. *a round*] a dance, as we say. In this sense the preceding "about" seems somewhat superfluous. The Qq, Ff print "round" with a capital letter, clearly showing that a substantive was intended. Furness, however, suggests "around," as an adverb, and urges "that it may receive the stamp of respectability by admission into Shakespeare's vocabulary"; but it is not found either in Shakespeare or in the Authorised Version of 1611.

109. *through brook*] a sound interpolation. The line is clearly defective without it. "Bourn" seems also a suitable word.

113. the Asse-head] Furness aptly remarks: "I cannot but think that this trifling expression stamps this stage-direction as taken from a play-house copy." See Introduction, p. xviii.

Bot. Why do they run away? this is a knavery of them, to make me afeard.

Re-enter SNOUT.

Snout. O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee?

Bot. What do you see? you see an ass-head of your own, do you? [*Exit Snout.*

Re-enter QUINCE.

Quin. Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art translated. [*Exit.*

Bot. I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid. [*Sings.*

"The ousel cock, so black of hue,
With orange-tawny bill,
The throstle with his note so true,
The wren with little quill:"

115. Re-enter Snout] Capell; Enter . . . Qq, Ff. 116, 117. *see on thee?*] *see on thee? An ass's head?* Johnson conj. 119. [Exit Snout] Dyce; Exit Capell (at line 117); omitted Qq, Ff; Re-enter Quince] Capell; Enter Quince Q 1; Enter Peter Quince Q 2, Ff. 125. *I will*] *will* F 3, 4. [Sings] Pope; omitted Qq, Ff. 127. *ousel*] Pope, *Woosell* Qq, F 1, 2, 3; *Woosel* F 4. 130. *with little*] Qq, *and little* Ff.

118, 119. *you see an ass-head of your own, do you?*] Johnson needlessly proposed to add to Snout's preceding speech, "An ass's head?" but Halliwell says the phrase was a vernacular one of the day. Cf. Mrs. Quickly in the *Merry Wives*, I. iv. 135, "You shall have An fool's head of your own."

121. *translated*] transformed. Cf. I. i. 191; and the passage in *Comedy of Errors*, II. ii. 191–201, "This is the fairy land . . . If thou art changed to aught, 'tis to an ass."

127. *ousel cock*] the male blackbird, *Turdus merula*. Cotgrave gives: "Merle: m. A Mearle, Owsell, Blackbird. Merle noir. The Blackbird, or ordinarie Owsell."

129. *throstle*] the thrush, *Turdus musicus*. Furness well remarks that

Tita. What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

[*Awaking.*

Bot. [*Sings.*] "The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
The plain-song cuckoo gray,
Whose note full many a man doth mark,
And dares not answer, nay;"—

for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird? Who would give a bird the lie, though he cry "cuckoo" never so?

Tita. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note,

131. [Awaking] Waking Theobald; Sings waking Pope; omitted Qq, Ff.
132. [Sings] Theobald; omitted Qq, Ff.
140. *enamour'd*] *enamoured* Q 1, F 4; *enamored* Q 2, F 1, 2, 3.

the spelling "Trassell" in the Qq and F 1 of the *Merchant of Venice*, I. ii. 65 ["if a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering"], probably with a broad "a," gives the pronunciation. There is little doubt that the sounds were hardly distinguishable. Cf. the rhyme of "crab" with "bob" in II. i. 48, 49.

130. *quill*] pipe, note; not, as Schmidt thinks, "wing-feather."

133. *plain-song cuckoo gray*] "plain-song" here probably refers to plain melody without any variation or accompaniment. Chaucer, in *The Cuckoo and Nightingale*, 118, makes the cuckoo say, "For my song is both true and *plaine*." Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time* (p. 51 note), says: "Prick-song meant harmony written or pricked down, in opposition to plain-song, where the descant rested with the will of the singer"; and Harting, *Ornithology of Shakespeare*, 1871, p. 150, says: "The cuckoo, as long ago remarked by John Heywood (*Epigrams*, black letter, 1587), begins to sing early in the season with the interval of a minor third; the bird then proceeds to a major third, next to a fourth, then to a fifth, after which its voice breaks, without attaining a minor sixth. It may therefore be said to have done much for musical science, because from this bird has been derived the minor scale, the origin of which has puzzled so many; the cuckoo's couplets being the minor third sung downwards." Yarrell, *British Birds*, ii. 188, thus describes the colour: "The head, neck, back and upper tail-coverts *bluish-grey* . . . chin, neck and upper part of the breast *ash-grey*."

135. *answer, nay*] "Bottom here refers to an opinion very prevalent in Shakespeare's time that the unfaithfulness of a wife was always guided by a destiny which no human power could avert." Halliwell. For a very similar idea, see *Merry Wives*, v. i. 245, 246:

"In love the heavens themselves do guide the state;
Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate."

Cf. also *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 908.

136. *set his wit to*] Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, II. i. 94, "Will you set your wit to a fool's?" Craig aptly remarks that the expressson "I would not even my wits to you" used to be common in Ireland, at least in the north.

So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

Bot. Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together nowadays; the more the pity, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek upon occasion.

Tita. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

Bot. Not so, neither: but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

Tita. Out of this wood do not desire to go;
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit of no common rate;
The summer still doth tend upon my state,
And I do love thee: therefore go with me;
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee;
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,

141–143.] as in Q 1. In Q 2, Ff, line 143 *On the first . . .* precedes line 141 *So is mine eye . . .* 144. *mistress*] *mistresse* Qq, F 1; *maistresse* F 2, 3; *maistress* F 4.

148. *gleek*] a word of obscure origin; possibly a diminutive of "glee"; and used both as a verb (as in this passage) and a substantive, which is much more common. As a verb, in the transitive sense, to trick, circumvent; and intransitive (as here), to make a jest or gibe (at a person). Cf. *Henry V.* v. i. 78, "I have seen you gleeking and galling at this gentleman." Nashe, *Strange Newes*, 1593, Works (ed. Grosart), ii. 197, "Not mee alone did hee revile . . . but glickt at Pap-hatchet once more." Cotgrave has "*Limer* . . . to gleeke, or looke askew at." As a substantive, see Lyly, *Euphues* (ed. Arb. 291), "What greater discurtesie . . . then with so many nips, such bitter girdes, such disdainful glickes to answere him that honoured hir." See also *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. v. 115, "What will you give us? No money, on my faith, but the gleek"; and *New Eng. Dict.*, *s.v.*

156. *spirit . . .*] Cf. III. ii. 388, Oberon's "But we are spirits of another sort."

And sing, while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep:
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.—
Peaseblossom! Cobweb! Mote! and Mustard-seed!

Enter Four Fairies.

First Fai. Ready.
Sec. Fai. And I.
Third Fai. And I.
Fourth Fai. Where shall we go? 165
Tita. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees, 170
And, for night tapers, crop their waxen thighs,

161. *dost*] *doth* F 3, 4. 164. *Peaseblossom! . . . Mustard-seed!*] Qq. Enter Pease-blossome . . . Mustard-seede and four fairies Ff (as a stage-direction). *Mote*] Grant White; *Moth* Qq, Ff. 165. *Scene III.*] Pope. Enter . . .] Enter foure Fairyes Qq (Fairies Q 2). First Fai. *Ready* . . . All. *Where shall we go?*] Capell; Fairies. *Ready; and I, and I, and I, where shall we go?* Qq, Ff (*Readie: goe?* Q 1); 1 Fai. *Ready;* 2 Fai. *And I;* 3 Fai. *And I;* 4 Fai. *Where shall we go?* Steevens, 1793 (Farmer conj.).

164. *Mote*] The form "Moth" is the invariable spelling in the Qq, Ff. See, for example, v. i. 316, where the old copies have "A Moth wil turne the ballance," the pronunciation of the word being undoubtedly "mote." See also *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. iii. 161:

"You found his Moth, the King your Moth did see;
But I a beame doe finde in each of three";

King John, IV. i. 92, "O heaven, that there were but a moth in yours"; and *As You Like It*, III. iii. 7, "I am here with thee and thy goats as the most capricious poet, honest Ovid, was among the Goths." I see nothing whatever to be gained by the retention of the old spelling.

168. *apricocks*] The earlier and more correct spelling of "apricots." See Ellacombe, *Plant Lore of Shakespeare*, *s.v.*

168. *dewberries*] Most probably the fruit of the dwarf mulberry or knot-berry, the fruit being still, as Halliwell remarked, called the dewberry by the Warwickshire peasantry, and exceedingly plentiful in the lanes between Stratford-on-Avon and Aston Cantlowe. See Ellacombe, *supra*, *s.v.*

And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed, and to arise;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

First Fai. Hail, mortal!

Sec. Fai. Hail!

Third Fai. Hail!

Fourth Fai. Hail!

Bot. I cry your worships' mercy, heartily. I beseech your worship's name.

Cob. Cobweb.

Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good master Cobweb: if I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you.—Your name, honest gentleman?

Peas. Peaseblossom.

Bot. I pray you, commend me to mistress Squash, your mother, and to master Peascod, your father. Good master Peaseblossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too.—Your name, I beseech you, sir?

177–180. First Fai. *Hail, mortal* . . . Fourth Fai. *Hail!*] Capell; 1 Fai. *Haile, mortall, haile!* 2 Fai. *Haile;* 3 Fai. *Haile* Qq, Ff. 181. *worships'*] *worship's* Rowe. 184. *you of*] Qq, Ff; *of you* Rowe. 191. *you of*] Qq, *of you* Ff. 192. *too*] *to* Qq, F 1.

172. *glow-worm's eyes*] Shakespeare here uses a certain amount of poetic licence, and does not see with the eye of the naturalist. The phosphorescence, as is well known, comes from the abdomen of the female insect. Cf. III. ii. 188, "eyes of light."

173. *To have my love to bed*] Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, scene ii. 39, "we'll have thee to a couch."

184. *desire you of*] Cf. III. i. 44, *ante*, "it were pity of my life"; and Chapman's *An Humerous Dayes Mirth* (Works, vol. i. p. 55), "I do desire *you of* more acquaintance."

189. *Squash*] a soft unripe peascod. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, I. v. 165, "not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy; as a squash is before 'tis a peascod."

Mus. Mustard-seed.

Bot. Good master Mustard-seed, I know your patience well: that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your house: I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire your more acquaintance, good master Mustard-seed.

Tita. Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.
The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye;
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.
Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another part of the Wood.*

Enter OBERON.

Obe. I wonder if Titania be awaked;
Then, what it was that next came in her eye,
Which she must dote on in extremity.

Enter PUCK.

Here comes my messenger.—How now, mad spirit?
What night-rule now about this haunted grove?

194.] After this line F 1 inserts *Peas. Pease-blossome*; omitted in F 2, 3, 4.

Scene II.

Scene II.] Capell; *Scene IV.* Pope. Theobald continues the scene. Another . . . Wood] Capell. Enter Oberon] Enter King of Fairies and Robin Goodfellow Qq; Enter King of Fairies (Pharies F 1), solus Ff. 3. Enter Puck] Ff, omitted Qq. 4. *spirit*] *sprite* Pope. 5. *haunted*] *gaunted* F 1.

202, 203. *The moon . . . she weeps*] "alluding to the supposed origin of dew in the moon." Walker, *Crit.* iii. 48. Cf. *Macbeth*, III. v. 23:

" Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound"

(if these lines are in fact Shakespeare's).

Scene II.

5. *night-rule*] "night-revel, night-sport." Dyce. "*Rule.* Apparently put for behaviour or conduct; with some

Puck. My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play,
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake:
When I did him at this advantage take,
An ass's nole I fixed on his head;

6, 7. *love. . . . Near . . . bower,*] Rowe; *loue, Neere, . . . bower* Q 1; *loue, Neere . . . bower,* Q 2, Ff. 13. *thick-skin*] *thick-skull* Hanmer. 14. *sport*] Rowe; *sport,* Qq, Ff. 17. *nole*] *nowl* Johnson.

allusion perhaps to the frolics called *mis-rule.*" Nares's *Glossary.* Cf. *Twelfth Night,* II. iii. 130, "Mistress Mary, if you prized my lady's favour at anything more than contempt, you would not give means for this uncivil rule." Halliwell quotes from the *Statutes of the Streets of London* (Stowe, p. 666), "No man shall, after the houre of nine at the night, keep any rule whereby any such sudden outcry be made in the still of the night," etc.

9. *patches*] "patch" is properly a domestic fool or clown, and is used also as a term of contempt, perhaps derived from the Italian *pazzo,* or from his wearing a "patched" or parti-coloured coat. See *post,* IV. i. 212, "man is but a patched fool." In the present passage it means probably only meanly-dressed fellows or "tatterdemalions" (Johnson).

12. *nuptial-day*] "wedding-day" in II. i. 139.

13. *thick-skin*] Cf. *Merry Wives,* IV. v. 2, "What wouldst thou have, boor? what, thickskin?" and Holland's *Pliny* (Bk. xi. ch. 9), p. 346, "Some measure not the finenesse of spirit and wit by the puritie of bloud, but suppose creatures are brutish, more or lesse, according as their skin is thicker or thinner . . . And hereto they bring men also, as a proofe, who are thicke skinned, and more brawnie; for to be more grosse of sence and understanding."

13. *barren*] dull, brainless. Cf. *Twelfth Night,* I. v. 90, "such a barren rascal"; and *Hamlet,* III. ii. 46, "some quantity of barren spectators."

13. *sort*] crew, company. Cf. line 21, *infra; Richard II.* IV. i. 246, "a sort of traitors"; *2 Henry VI.* II. i. 167, "a sort of naughty persons," and III. ii. 277, "a sort of tinkers"; and *Richard III.* V. iii. 316, "a sort of vagabonds."

17. *nole*] "A grotesque word for head, like pate, noddle . . . In the Wicliffite versions of Genesis xlix. 8, where the earlier has 'thin hondis in the skulles of thin enemyes,' the later has 'thin hondis schulen be in the nollis of thin enemyes'; the Latin being *cervicibus.* Probably 'nole,' like 'noddle,' was the back part of the head, and so included the neck. Cotgrave has 'Occipital . . . belonging to the noddle; or hinder part of the head.'" Wright.

Anon, his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves, and madly sweep the sky;
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly;
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls;

19. *mimic*] *Minnick* Q 1; *Minnock* Q 2; *Mimmick* F 1, 2, 3; *Mimick* F 4. 21. *russet-pated*] F 4; *russet pated* Q 1; *russed pated* Q 2; *russed-pated* F 1, 2, 3; *russet-patted* Wright (Bennett conj.) withdrawn. 25. *our stamp*] *a stump* Johnson (Theobald conj.), *our stump* Theobald conj.

19. *mimic*] actor. Malone quotes from Dekker's *Guls Hornebooke*, 1609, p. 253, ed. Grosart, "and draw what troope you can from the stage after you; the Mimicks are beholden to you, for allowing them elbow roome"; and also from the *Satiromastix* of Marston and Dekker: "and took'st mad Ieronimoes part, to get service among the Mimickes." Wright quotes from Herrick's *The Wake*, ii. 63:

> "Morris-dancers thou shalt see,
> Marian too in Pagentrie:
> And a Mimick to devise
> Many grinning properties."

21. *russet-pated choughs*] grey-headed jackdaws. "The jackdaw, and not the Cornish chough or red-legged crow, is the bird referred to here. The head of the jackdaw about the ear-coverts and neck is 'grey'; and 'russet' meant not 'red,' but 'grey' or 'brown,' the colour of undyed wool, in most cases; although sometimes it was loosely applied." Marshall. In the *Promptorium Parvulorum* (*circa* 1440) we find, "*Russet*, Gresius," which is the French *gris*; in Junius's *Nomenclator* (1587), "*Rauus* . . . *Faune*, *tané*, *rosset*, russet or tawnie colour"; and in Florio's *A Worlde of Wordes* (1598), "*Grigietto*, a fine graie or sheepes *russet*." Cotgrave (1611) has "gris. m. ise. f., Gray, *light-russet*, grizle, ash-coloured, hoarie, whitish." In Shakespeare's day, and long before and after, chough and jackdaw seem to have been practically synonymous. See the passages in Holland's *Pliny*, x. 29 (vol. i. p. 285), and xvii. 14 (vol. i. p. 516). Cf. *King Lear*, iv. vi. 13, "The crows and choughs that wing the midway air," and Craig's note thereon: "also compare Statute 24, Henry viii. cap. 10, 'Rookes, crowes, and choughes do yeerely devour and consume a wonderful quantity of corne and graine' (ed. 1636, p. 528). Still it is quite likely that the bird here referred to may have been the Cornish chough, *Pyrochorax graculus*, which is now sometimes to be met with on Beachy Head, and may well then have been common on Dover Cliff." Shakespeare, accompanying his brother actors in their provincial tours, was certainly familiar with Dover; but even if the Cornish chough was common there in his time, it is more probable that in this passage of the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, written as it must have been in the late autumn of 1594, he was thinking only of the jackdaw, the more common bird of the Warwickshire and Gloucestershire fields.

25. *at our stamp*] Johnson says: "Fairies are never represented stamping, or of a size that should give force

He murder cries, and help from Athens calls.
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears thus strong,
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong:
For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch;
Some sleeves; some hats: from yielders all things catch.
I led them on in this distracted fear,
And left sweet Pyramus translated there:
When in that moment, so it came to pass,
Titania waked, and straightway loved an ass.

Obe. This falls out better than I could devise.
But hast thou yet latch'd the Athenian's eyes

30. *yielders*] F 3, 4; *yeelders* Qq, F 1, 2. 36. *latch'd*] *latcht* Q 1, F 3, 4; *lacht* Q 2, F 1, 2; *lech'd* Hanmer; *hatch'd* Daniel conj.

to a stamp . . . I read at 'a stump.'" So Drayton, *Nymphidia* (ed. 1748), 166:

"A 'stump' doth 'trip him' in his pace,
Down fell poor Hob upon his face, etc."

But, on the other hand, Steevens well remarks, "The 'stamp' of a fairy might be efficacious though not loud; neither is it necessary to suppose, when supernatural beings are spoken of, that the size of the agent determines the force of the action. See IV. i. 88, *post*:

"Sound, music! Come, my queen, take hands with me,
And 'rock' the ground whereon these sleepers be."

And Ritson quotes Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 1584: "Robin Goodfellow . . . would chafe exceedingly if the maid or good wife of the house . . . laid anie clothes for him beesides his messe of white bread and milke, which was his standing fee. For in that case he saith, What have we here? Hemton, hamten, here will I nevermore tread nor stampen." Furness remarks that "Puck's modern change to 'our,' when he was the sole agent, is somewhat unaccountable," and quotes a highly ingenious conjecture of Allen (in MS.): "'At *one* stamp,'—as we might say; at one bound, at one rush; for they started so instantly, all together, that all their feet struck the ground, on starting to run, with one stamp, one noise."

31. *distracted*] See "feigning," I. i. 31.

36. *latch'd*] To "latch with love-juice" is to "drop" love-juice upon, or simply to moisten, smear, or anoint therewith. There has been considerable diversity of opinion among commentators as to the true meaning of the word in Shakespeare. But "'drop' the liquor," II. i. 178, seems fairly conclusive, modified, however, in some degree by "'streak' her eyes," II. i. 257; and "'anoint' his eyes," 261; also "'crush' this herb into" in III. ii. 366. Skeat points out that the word here used has nothing to do with "latch," "to catch," and that the explanation depends upon the fact that there are two distinct verbs, both spelt "latch," which are wholly unrelated to each other. He says: "If

With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

Puck. I took him sleeping,—that is finish'd too,—
And the Athenian woman by his side;
That when he waked, of force she must be eyed.

Enter DEMETRIUS *and* HERMIA.

Obe. Stand close; this is the same Athenian.

Puck. This is the woman, but not this the man.

Dem. O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

Her. Now I but chide, but I should use thee worse;
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in knee-deep,

38. Puck] Rowe; Rob. Qq, Ff; *too*] *to* Qq, F 1. 40. *waked*] *wak't* Qq, Ff; *wakes* Pope. 41. *Scene v.*] Pope. 42. Puck] Rowe; Rob. Qq, Ff. 48, 49. *Being . . . too*] Rowe (ed. 2); one line in Qq, Ff. 48. *knee-deep*] Phelps, Craig (Coleridge *sed quære* Maginn conj.); *the deep* Qq, Ff.

we will give up the A.-S. *gelæccan* and consider the common English verb 'to leak,' we shall soon come to a satisfactory result. To 'leak' means to admit drops of water, and 'latch' is practically the causal form. The nearest related A.-S. word is *leccan*, to moisten, wet, irrigate." In the other passages where "latch" is used by Shakespeare, it certainly has the sense of "catch," from A.-S. *læccan* or *gelæccan*. See *Macbeth*, IV. iii. 195:

> "But I have words
> That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
> Where hearing should not latch them";

and *Sonnet*, CXIII. 6:

> "For it [*i.e.* the eye] no form delivers to the heart
> Of bird, or flower, or shape, which it doth latch."

And Holland's *Pliny*, VIII. 24, of the Ichneumon: "In fight he sets up his taile, and whips about, turning his taile to the enemie, and therein latcheth and receiveth all the strokes of the Aspis." Dyce adopts Hanmer's interpretation, "letch'd, licked over," Fr. *lecher*, to lick; but this seems inadmissible.

48. *o'er shoes in blood*] Steevens compares *Macbeth*, III. iv. 136:

> "I am in blood
> Stepp'd in so far, that should I wade no more
> Returning were as tedious as give o'er";

and Wright, the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I. i. 24:

> "*Pro.* For he was more than over shoes in love.
> *Val.* 'Tis true; for you are over boots in love."

Cf. also *Comedy of Errors*, III. ii. 106, "A man may go over shoes in the grime of it."

48. *knee-deep*] It is a matter of some

And kill me too. . . . . .
The sun was not so true unto the day,
As he to me: would he have stol'n away
From sleeping Hermia? I 'll believe as soon,
This whole earth may be bored, and that the moon
May through the centre creep, and so displease
Her brother's noon-tide with the Antipodes.

49. *too*] *to* Qq; *And kill me too, nor leave me here to weep* Editor conj. 52. *From*] *Frow* Q 1. 54. *displease*] *disease* Hanmer, *displace* Long MS. and D. Wilson conj., *disseise* Annandale conj. 55. *with the*] *i' th'* Warburton.

doubt whether this excellent and certain emendation is to be attributed to Coleridge or Maginn. Walker (*Crit.* iii. 49) says, "Read, with Coleridge, '*knee*-deep.'" Compare *Winter's Tale*, I. ii. 186, "Inch-thick, knee-deep, o'er head and ears a fork'd one!" and Heywood, *Woman Killed with Kindness*, Dodsley, vii. 268:

"Come, come, let 's in;
Once over shoes, we are straight o'er head in sin."

Dyce adopts this reading, attributing it to Coleridge, most probably on the authority of Walker simply, but giving no reference to any passage in Coleridge. I agree with Furness in his "strong suspicion" that the emendation is to be attributed to Maginn. In the latter's *Shakespeare Papers*, 1860, p. 138 note, he says: "Should we not read '*knee* deep'? As you are already over your shoes, wade on until the bloody tide reaches your knees. In Shakespeare's time 'knee' was generally spelt 'kne'; and between 'the' and 'kne' there is not much difference in writing." Furness objects on the ground that "in water knee-deep we can certainly wade, but it can hardly be said that we can 'plunge' into it." But the objection seems to me untenable if not hypercritical. Shakespeare, I think, uses "plunge" here, not in the sense of complete immersion—otherwise how then could Demetrius kill Hermia too—but simply in the general sense of a further advance in the tide of blood on the part of Demetrius; and besides the expression "*the* deep," *i.e.* of blood, as a metaphor, seems highly overstrained and needless for this particular purpose, *i.e.* the killing of Hermia.

49. *And kill me too*] made a separate line by Rowe, who is followed by all editors. The broken line may or may not be explained by the change of subject, but I am inclined to think that some words have dropped out, forming a line rhyming with the preceding couplet, and making with them a triplet. It is noteworthy that there are triplet lines occurring in this scene, in 159–161 and 166–168.

54. *the centre*] *i.e.* of the earth, and therefore of the universe, according to the Ptolemaic astronomy. Cf. *Hamlet*, II. ii. 159, "though it [truth] were hid indeed Within the centre."

54. *displease*] "It is pretty certain 'displease' is a corruption of the text," says Marshall, and I am inclined to agree with him. He proceeds, "I cannot make any sense of 'displease'; 'displace' would seem a more natural word to use; but it does not rhyme with 'Antipodes.' Dr. Annandale suggests, very ingeniously, 'disseise'= to deprive of, to dispossess; a word used by Spenser and Drayton." For the use of "disease," cf. *Coriolanus*, I. iii. 117, "As she is now, she will but disease our better mirth."

It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;
So should a murderer look, so dread, so grim.

Dem. So should the murder'd look; and so should I,
Pierced through the heart with your stern cruelty:
Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear,
As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

Her. What 's this to my Lysander? where is he?
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

Dem. I had rather give his carcase to my hounds.

Her. Out, dog! out, cur! thou drivest me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him then?
Henceforth be never number'd among men!
O! once tell true, tell true, even for my sake;
Durst thou have look'd upon him, being awake,
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch!
Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?
An adder did it; for with doubler tongue
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

Dem. You spend your passion on a mispris'd mood:

57, 60. *murderer*] *murtherer* Q 1. 57. *dread*] Pope; *dead* Qq, Ff. 58. *murder'd*] *murthered* Q 1, *murdered* Q 2, *murderer* Ff. 60. *look*] *looke* Qq, *looks* Ff. 64. *I had*] Q 1, *Ide* Q 2, *I'de* Ff, *I'd* Rowe, *I'ad* Pope. 65. *bounds*] *bonds* Q 2. 68. *true,*] *true:* Q 1; *true* Q 2, F 1. 69. *have*] Qq, *a* Ff. 70. *touch*] *tutch* Qq, Ff. 72. *An*] *And* F 2. 74. *on*] *in* Steevens conj.

57. *dread*] I think Pope's reading is justified by the context. Steevens, in defence of "dead," compares *2 Henry IV.* I. i. 71:

"Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless,
So dull, so dead in look, so woe-begone";

but it is difficult to see the bearing of the quotation on the present passage. Capell remarks: "Pope's change to 'dread' is implied in 'grim'; by 'dead' is meant 'pale.'"

70. *touch*] exploit or stroke. Johnson. "A *touch* anciently signified a *trick* or *feat*. Ascham has, 'The shrewd *touches* of many curst boys.' And, in the old story of *Howleglas*, 'For at all times he did some mad *touch*.'" Hudson.

74. *on a mispris'd mood*] *i.e.* in mistaken anger. Cf. *Two Gentlemen of*

I am not guilty of Lysander's blood;
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.
Her. I pray thee, tell me, then, that he is well.
Dem. An if I could, what should I get therefore.
Her. A privilege, never to see me more.
And from thy hated presence part I so:
See me no more, whether he be dead or no. [*Exit.*
Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vein:
Here, therefore, for a while I will remain.
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow
For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe;
Which now in some slight measure it will pay,
If for his tender here I make some stay.
[*Lies down and sleeps.*
Obe. What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite,
And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight:
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue
Some true-love turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.

76. *aught*] Theobald (ed. 2); *ought* Qq, Ff. 78. *An*] Capell; *And* Qq, Ff. 80, 81. *And . . . more*] So in Pope; one line in Qq, Ff. 80. *so*] Pope; omitted Qq, Ff. 81. *he be*] *he's* Pope. 85. *sleep*] Rowe; *slippe* Q 1; *slip* Q 2, Ff. 87. [Lies down and sleeps] Collier; Ly doune Q 1; Lie downe Q 2, Ff. 88. *Scene VI.*] Pope. 91. *turn'd, and not*] *turn'd false, not* Hanmer.

Verona, IV. i. 51, "Who, in my mood, I stabb'd unto the heart." Cf. "misprision," line 90, *post*; and for the legal significations of the word in the old statutes, see Rushton's *Shakespeare Illustrated by the Lex Scripta*, 1870, p. 79 *sqq*.

80. *part I so*:] Pope's emendation is necessary and undoubtedly correct, but hardly his punctuation. That of the Qq, Ff, namely, the colon after "I," seems perhaps preferable.

85–87.] Marshall remarks that "there is an incongruous, prosaic, and legal character about these lines which smells of an attorney's office." Possibly; and the explanation may lie in Shakespeare's keen recollection of the paternal misfortunes and legal embarrassments before his departure from Stratford.

87. [Lies down and sleeps] The stage-direction in Q 1 and the Folio, in the imperative mood, betrays the play-house copy.

90. *misprision*] mistake. Cf. 74, *ante*.

Puck. Then fate o'er-rules; that, one man holding troth,
A million fail, confounding oath on oath.
Obe. About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And Helena of Athens look thou find:
All fancy-sick she is, and pale of cheer
With sighs of love, that costs the fresh blood dear:
By some illusion see thou bring her here;
I 'll charm his eyes against she do appear.
Puck. I go, I go, *my lord*; look how I go;
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow. [*Exit.*
Obe. Flower of this purple dye,
Hit with Cupid's archery,

92. Puck] Rowe; Robi. Q 1; Rob. Q 2, Ff; *that,*] *for* Hanmer. 94. Obe.] Ob. Qq, F 1, 3, 4; Rob. F 2. 97. *costs*] Qq, Ff; *cost* Hanmer. 99. *do*] Q 2, *doe* Q 1, *doth* Ff. 100. Puck] Rowe, Robin Qq, Rob. Ff; *my lord*] Editor; *look*] *look, master* Hanmer. 101. [Exit] Q 2, Ff; omitted Q 1.

92, 93. *Then . . . oath*] Puck's excuse for his "misprision" is, according to Marshall, "that fate o'er-rules chance here; for the chance is that, for one man true to his oath in love, one finds a million who are false to it."

96. *fancy-sick*] love-sick. Cf. I. i. 155.

96. *cheer*] "'Cheer' is from the old French *chère*, which Cotgrave thus explains: 'The face, visage, countenance, favour, looks, aspect.' Hence it naturally came to mean that which affects the face, or gives it expression." Hudson.

97. *costs*] Nearly all modern editors follow Theobald in printing the plural "cost," but the change is unnecessary. See Abbott, § 247.

97. *dear*] alluding to the old and still prevalent superstition that every sigh cost a drop of the heart's blood. So *2 Henry VI.* III. ii. 61:

"Might . . . blood-consuming sighs recall his life,
I would be blind with weeping, sick with groans,
Look pale as primrose, with blood-drinking sighs";

3 Henry VI. IV. iv. 22:

"Ay, ay, for this I draw in many a tear,
And stop the rising of blood-sucking sighs";

and *Hamlet*, IV. vii. 123:

"And then this 'should' is like a spendrift sigh,
That hurts by easing."

100. my lord] Cf. for this necessary interpolation, II. i. 268; 378, *post*; and IV. i. 101.

101. *Tartar's bow*] Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, I. iv. 5, "Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath." Douce quotes Golding's *Ovid*, Book X.:

"and though that she
Did fly as swift as Arrow from a Turkye bowe."

Ariel in *The Tempest*, V. i. 102, "drinks the air before him."

Sink in apple of his eye!
When his love he doth espy
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.
When thou wak'st, if she be by,
Beg of her for remedy.

Re-enter PUCK.

Puck. Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand;
And the youth, mistook by me,
Pleading for a lover's fee;
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!

Obe. Stand aside: the noise they make
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

Puck. Then will two at once woo one;
That must needs be sport alone;
And those things do best please me
That befall preposterously.

109. *her*] *her*, Q 1. Re-enter . . .] Capell; Enter . . .] Qq, Ff.

113. *lover's fee*] Cf. Peele's *Arraignment of Paris*, I. ii. 87 (Bullen), "And I will have a lover's fee; they say unkiss'd unkind." Halliwell says that three kisses were properly a "lover's fee," and quotes from an MS. ballad, *circa* 1650:

"How many, saies Batt;
Why three, saies Matt,
For that 's a mayden's fee."

Furness is of opinion that the meaning is rather "estate, right by virtue of his title as lover." The word "pleading" perhaps lends some weight to this view.

115. *these mortals*] Cf. "the human mortals" of II. i. 101.

119. *sport alone*] *i.e.* sport that nothing can match, unparalleled. See Abbott, § 18. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, I. i. 15:

"So full of shapes is fancy,
That it alone is high fantastical";

and *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV. vi. 30, "I am alone the villain of the earth."

121. *preposterously*] literally "in the wrong order," as in *Othello*, I. iii. 62, "For nature so preposterously to err."

Enter LYSANDER *and* HELENA.

Lys. Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?
Scorn and derision never come in tears:
Look, when I vow, I weep; and vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.
How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
Bearing the badge of faith, to prove them true?
Hel. You do advance your cunning more and more.
When truth kills truth, O devilish holy fray!
These vows are Hermia's; will you give her o'er?
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh:
Your vows to her and me, put in two scales,
Will even weigh; and both as light as tales.
Lys. I had no judgment when to her I swore.
Hel. Nor none, in my mind, now you give her o'er.
Lys. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.
Dem. [*Awaking.*] O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?

122. *Scene VII.*] Pope; *Scene VI.* Warburton. 123. *come*] Qq, *comes* Ff. 137. [Awaking] omitted Qq; Awa. Ff (end of 136).

124, 125. *vows so born . . . appears*] Furness thus paraphrases, and rightly, I think: "vows, thus born, appear, from their very nativity, to be all pure truth." "Appears," he says, "should be, according to modern grammar, in the plural; its subject is 'vows'—it is singular merely by attraction; 'all truth' is the predicate, not the subject." See Abbott, §§ 417, 376, who thinks the construction of "vows so born" to be an absolute construction.

127. *badge*] "This is an allusion to the badges (*i.e.* family crests) anciently worn on the sleeves of servants and retainers." Steevens. Cf. *Tempest*, v. i. 267, "Mark but the badges of these men, my lords, Then say if they be true."

129.] "If Lysander's present protestations are true, they destroy the truth of his former vows to Hermia, and the contest between these two truths, which in themselves are holy, must in the issue be devilish and end in the destruction of both." Wright.

133. *tales*] Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, II. ii. 136:

"Truths would be tales
Where now half tales be truths."

136.] Walker suspected a line was lost here.

Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!
That pure congealed white, high Taurus' snow,
Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow
When thou hold'st up thy hand: O let me kiss
This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!
Hel. O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me, for your merriment.
If you were civil, and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.
Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
But you must join in flouts to mock me too?
If you were men, as men you are in show,
You would not use a gentle lady so;
To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,
When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.

144. *princess*] *pureness* Hanmer, *impress* Staunton (Collier conj.), *purest* Lettsom conj., *essence* Cartwright conj. 145. *all are*] *are all* Ff. 150. *join in flouts*] Hanmer; *joyne in soules* Qq, Ff (*joyne*, Q 1); *must join insolents* Warburton; *join in scorns* or *in scoffs* Johnson conj.; *join in scouls* Blackstone conj.; *join, ill souls* Tyrwhitt conj.; *join, in sooth*, Bailey conj.; *join insults* Spedding conj.; *too*] *to* Q 1, F 1, 2. 151. *were*] Qq, *are* Ff.

139. *ripe*] Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 1103, "ripe-red cherries"; and *As You Like it*, III. v. 120, 121, "redness in his lip A little riper."

144. *princess*] Dyce, *Remarks*, p. 48, says: "When Mr. Collier offered [his] very unnecessary conjecture, 'impress,' he did not see that these two rapturous encomiums on the hand of Helena have no connexion with each other. Demetrius terms it 'princess of pure white,' because its whiteness exceeded all other whiteness; and 'seal of bliss,' because it was to confirm the happiness of her accepted lover." Steevens quotes Raleigh's *Discovery of Guiana*, where the pine-apple is called "the princess of fruits."

144. *seal*] Cf. "the sealing-day," I. i. 84; and *Antony and Cleopatra*, III. xiii. 125, "My playfellow, your hand; this kingly seal, And plighter of high hearts!"

150. *in flouts*] Hanmer's reading, which is undoubtedly correct. Cf. for strong confirmation of this, II. ii. 127, Helena's "But you must 'flout' my insufficiency"; line 216 of this scene, her "To join with men in 'scorning' your poor friend"; and line 327 of this scene, Hermia's "Why will you suffer her to 'flout' me thus?" Steevens explains the reading of Q 1 and F as meaning "to join heartily, unite in the same mind," but this seems very far-fetched and strained.

You both are rivals, and love Hermia;
And now both rivals to mock Helena:
A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,
To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes
With your derision! none of noble sort
Would so offend a virgin, and extort
A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

Lys. You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;
For you love Hermia; this you know I know:
And here, with all good-will, with all my heart,
In Hermia's love I yield you up my part;
And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
Whom I do love, and will do till my death.

Hel. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

Dem. Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none:
If e'er I loved her, all that love is gone.
My heart to her but as guest-wise sojourn'd;

159. *derision! none of*] *derision; none of* Ff; *derision, none of* Q 2; *derision None, of* Q 1. 164. *here*] *heare* Q 1. 166. *of*] *in* Collier, ed. 2. 167. *will do*] *will love* Cambridge editors; *till*] Q 1; *to* Q 2, Ff. 171. *to her*] *with her* Johnson.

157. *trim*] Cf. for a similar ironical use, *1 Henry IV.* v. i. 137, "What is that honour? Air. A trim reckoning!"

158. *conjure*] accent on first syllable, as in *Romeo and Juliet*, II. i. 6, "Nay, I'll conjure too."

159. *sort*] Here used for "degree" or "quality." Malone. Cotgrave has: "Gens de mise, Persons of worth, sort, qualitie."

160. *extort*] usually defined as "wring," "wrest." Allen MS. (quoted by Furness) says: "May not this possibly mean, to produce by 'torture' the 'suffering' of a poor soul? To take away from a poor soul her patience seems to me commonplace."

166. *bequeath*] Shakespeare sometimes applies this word to real property, as in *King John* I. i. 109, sometimes to personal property, as it is applied at the present day, as in *As You Like It*, I. i. 2; and frequently he applies it to words and things which do not suggest the idea of such property, as in this passage, in *As You Like It*, v. iv. 169, and numerous others. See Rushton, *Shakespeare's Testamentary Language*, 1869, pp. 19 *sqq.*

171. *to her*] Johnson's emendation of "with" for "to," which is adopted by nearly all editors, is hardly necessary. Wright quotes other examples of "to" in a sense not far different from that of the present passage, and compares *Measure for Measure*, I. ii. 186, "Im-

And now to Helen is it home return'd,
There to remain.

Lys. Helen, it is not so.

Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Lest, to thy peril, thou aby it dear.
Look where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

Re-enter HERMIA.

Her. Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,
It pays the hearing double recompence.
Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

Lys. Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?

Her. What love could press Lysander from my side?

Lys. Lysander's love, that would not let him bide,
Fair Helena, who more engilds the night
Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light.

172. *is it*] Q 1; *it is* Q 2, Ff. 173. *There*] *There ever* Pope; *Helen*] Q 1; omitted Q 2, Ff. 175. *aby*] Q 1; *abide* Q 2, Ff; *dear*] *here* Walker conj. 176. Re-enter . . .] Dyce; Enter . . . Qq, Ff. 177. *Scene VIII.*] Pope; *Scene VII.* Warburton. 182. *thy*] Qq, *that* Ff. 188. *oes*] *orbs* Grey conj.

plore her, in my voice, that she make friends To the strict deputy"; and *Two Gentlemen*, I. i. 57, "To Milan, let me hear from thee by letters."

175. *aby*] pay or atone for. Cf. 335, *infra*; *Julius Cæsar*, III. i. 94, "and let no man abide this deed"; III. ii. 122, "some will dear abide it"; Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, IV. i. 53, "Yet thou, false squire, his fault shall deare aby"; and Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, III. i. (p. 425, vol. vi. ed. 1778), "Foolhardy knight, full soon thou shalt 'aby' This fond reproach; thy body will I bang." The Folio's "abide" is, according to Skeat, "a mere corruption." The two words are etymologically distinct, but seem to have been confused.

188. *oes*] circles. Cf. *Henry V.* Prologue, 12:

"Or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?"

Steevens quotes from John Davies's

Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,
The hate I bare thee made me leave thee so?
Her. You speak not as you think; it cannot be.
Hel. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd, all three,
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspired, have you with these contrived
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us,—O *me*! is all forgot?
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,

190. *bare*] *bear* F 4. 194. *of me*] *to me* Johnson. 199. *sisters' vows*] *sisters vowes* Qq, Ff; *sister vows* Capell (Upton conj.); *sister-vows* Dyce (ed. 2). 201. *O* me *! is all*] Editor, *O, is all* Qq, F 1; *O, and is all* F 2, 3, 4; *O, is all now* Malone; *O, now is all* Reed; *O, is it all* Spedding conj.; *Oh! is this all* Keightley; *O, is all this* Hudson. 202. *school-days'*] *school-day* Capell; *childhood*] *childhoods* F 3, 4. 203. *two artificial*] *to artificer* D. Wilson conj.

Microcosmos, 1605, p. 233, "which silver oes and spangles over-ran"; and Halliwell cites Bacon, *Essays*, xxxvii. *Of Masques and Triumphs*, "and oes, or spangs, as they are of no great cost, so are they of most glory." Of course Shakespeare puns on "o's" and "i's." "I do not take it that Shakespeare meant eyes as objects of vision, but bright shining eye-like lights." Craig.

201. *O* me !] The correction is amply justified by lines 272 and 282, *infra*. The metre of the line as it stands in the Qq and F 1 is certainly defective, and Marshall's explanation that "the O is here a prolonged exclamation, and the hiatus in the metre is filled by the emotion of the actress," is as weak as Furness's idea that "the break in the line gives ample pause for supplying a lost syllable." See Introduction, pp. ix *sqq*.

202. *school-days' friendship*] Cf. a like reference in *Julius Cæsar*, v. v. 26, "we two went to school together."

203. *artificial*] one of the adjectives which have both an active and a passive meaning; but here used, as Walker (*Crit.* i. 96) points out, "with reference to the agent; *deabus artificibus similes*" — "for the *worker* in art, not the *work*." Hudson. Walker (*Crit.* i. 154), in his chapter on "Ovid's Influence on Shakespeare," suggests that there is in this passage an unconscious allusion to the story of Arachne and Minerva, which had impressed Shakespeare in reading.

Have with our neelds created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
But yet a union in partition;
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem:
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,

204. *Have . . . both*] *Created with our needles both* Pope; *neelds*] Rann, Malone (1790), Steevens (1793). 210. *yet*] omitted F 3, 4; *a*] F 1, 2, 3; *an* Qq, F 4. 211. *lovely*] *loving* Collier (ed. 2). 212. *So*] *Or* Hanmer. 213. *first, like*] Theobald (Folkes conj.); *first life* Qq, F 1; *first life,* F 2, 3, 4.

204. *neelds*] so Shakespeare most probably wrote, instead of the "needles" of the Folio. But the word seems to have been pronounced by him as a monosyllable or a disyllable according to metric necessity. See, *e.g.*, for the monosyllable, *Pericles*, IV. Gower 23; V. Gower 5 (if these lines are indeed Shakespeare's); *Cymbeline*, I. i. 168; *Lucrece*, 819; *King John*, V. ii. 157; *Richard II.* V. v. 17. Furness notes the disyllabic pronunciation in *Lucrece*, 317, "Lucretia's glove, wherein her needle sticks."

211. *lovely*] Dyce thinks this may be equivalent to "loving," which latter is Collier's emendation. Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, III. ii. 125, "And seal the title with a lovely kiss"; Peele's *Arraignment of Paris*, p. 358, ed. Dyce, 1861, "and I will give thee many a 'lovely' kiss"; and Greene's *James IV.* p. 189, ed. Dyce, 1861:

> "A father, brother, and a vowed friend
> Link all these 'lovely' styles, good king, in one."

213. *Two of the first*] Douce, i. 194, says: "It may be doubted whether this passage has been rightly explained, and whether the commentators have not given Shakespeare credit for more skill in heraldry than he really possessed, or at least than he intended to exhibit on the present occasion. Helena says, We had two seeming bodies, but only one heart. She then exemplifies her position by a simile—We had *two of the first, i.e. bodies*, like the double coats in heraldry that belong to man and wife as *one person*, but which, like our *single heart*, have but *one crest*." Staunton goes somewhat further. He says: "The plain heraldical allusion is to the simple impalements of two armorial ensigns, as they are marshalled side by side to represent a marriage; and the expression, Two of the first, is to *that particular form of dividing the shield being the first in order of the nine ordinary partitions of the Escutcheon.* These principles were familiarly understood in the time of Shakespeare by all the readers of the many very popular heraldical works of the period, and an extract from one of these will probably render the meaning of the passage clear. In *The Accedence of Armorie*, published by Gerard Leigh in 1597, he says: 'Now will I declare to you of ix sundrie Partitions:—the *First whereof is a partition from the highest part of*

Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.
And will you rend our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it;
Though I alone do feel the injury.

Her. I am amazed at your passionate words:
I scorn you not; it seems that you scorn me.

Hel. Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
To follow me, and praise my eyes and face?
And made your other love, Demetrius,
Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,
To call me goddess, nymph, divine, and rare,
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this
To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,
And tender me, forsooth, affection;
But by your setting on, by your consent?
What though I be not so in grace as you,
So hung upon with love, so fortunate;
But miserable most, to love unloved?

215. *rend*] Rowe; *rent* Qq, Ff. 218. *for it*] *for't* Walker conj. 220. *I am amazed at your passionate words*] Ff, *I am amazed at your words* Qq.

the Escocheon to the lowest. And though it must be blazed so, yet is it a joining together. It is also a marriage, that is to say, *two cotes*; the man's on the right side, and the woman's on the left: as it might be said that Argent had married with Gules.' In different words, this is nothing else than an amplification of Helena's own expression, 'seeming parted; But yet a union in partition.' The shield bearing the arms of two married persons would of course be surmounted by one crest only, as the text properly remarks, that of the husband. In Shakespeare's day, the only pleas for bearing two crests were ancient usage, or a special grant. The modern practice of introducing a second crest by an heiress has been most improperly adopted from the German heraldical system; for it should be remembered, that as a female cannot wear a helmet, so neither can she bear a crest."

215. *rend*] There seems to be no sound reason for printing the old form "rent."

This you should pity, rather than despise.
Her. I understand not what you mean by this.
Hel. Ay, do, persever, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;
Wink at each other; hold the sweet jest up:
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But, fare ye well: 'tis partly my own fault;
Which death, or absence, soon shall remedy.
Lys. Stay, gentle Helena; hear my excuse;
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!
Hel. O excellent!
Her. Sweet, do not scorn her so.
Dem. If she cannot entreat, I can compel.
Lys. Thou canst compel no more than she entreat:
Thy threats have no more strength than her weak prayers.—
Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do;
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,
To prove him false that says I love thee not.
Dem. I say I love thee more than he can do.

237. *Ay, do, persever*] *I doe. Perseuer* Q 1; *I, do, perseuer* Q 2, Ff; *Ay, do, persevere* Rowe. 238. *Make mouths*] *Make mows* Steevens (1793). 241. *have*] *had* Collier (ed. 2). 243. *my*] Q 1; *mine* Q 2, Ff. 246. *my life*] Qq, F 1; omitted F 2, 3, 4. 250. *prayers*] Theobald; *praise* Qq, Ff; *prays* Capell (Theobald conj.). 252. *lose*] *loose* Q 1.

237. *persever*] Shakespeare has numerous examples of words with the accent nearer the beginning than in modern usage; and as to this word, cf. *All's Well*, III. vii. 37; *King John*, II. i. 421; and *Hamlet*, I. ii. 92.

238. *mouths*] a common corruption of "mows," grimaces. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV. iv. 50, "Make mouths at the invisible event."

239. *hold the sweet jest up*] Cf. *Merry Wives*, V. v. 109, "I pray you, come, hold up the jest no higher"; and *Much Ado*, II. iii. 126, "He hath ta'en the infection; hold it up."

Lys. If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.
Dem. Quick, come!
Her. Lysander, whereto tends all this?
Lys. Away, you Ethiope!
Her. No, no, he 'll *kill thee!*
Dem. Seem to break loose; take on, as you would follow;
But yet come not: you are a tame man, go!
Lys. Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose;

255. *too*] *to* Qq. 257. *Ethiope*] *Ethiope you* Heath conj. 257, 258. Her. *No, no! he'll* kill thee! Dem. *Seem to break loose ;*] Editor; Dem. *No, no: heele Seeme to breake loose* Q1; *No, no, hee'l seeme to breake loose* [one line] Q 2; *No, no, Sir, seem to breake loose* [one line] Ff; *No, no; he'll not come.—Seem to break loose* Capell; *No, no; he'll—sir, Seem to break loose* Malone; *No, no; sir:—he will Seem to break loose* (Steevens, 1793); *No, no, sir; you Seem to break loose* Dyce, ed. 2 (Lettsom conj.); *No! no, sir; thou'lt Seem to break loose* Kinnear; *No, no; he'll but Seem to break loose* Nicholson conj.; *No, no, sir:—do; Seem to break loose* Hudson. 260. *off*] *of* Q 1; *burr*] *bur* Qq, F 1; *but* F 2, 3. 4.

257. *Ethiope!*] Hermia was evidently a brunette, like Rosaline in *Love's Labour's Lost*. See IV. iii. 268 of that play (in which the king compares her to an Ethiope), "And Ethiopes of their sweet complexion crack," *i.e.* boast.

257, 258. *No, no! . . . loose*] This obscure and corrupt passage has given rise to much comment and conjecture. The Cambridge editors are of opinion, rightly I think, that some words have fallen out of the text; and the text, as above arranged, seems the simplest and most probable solution of the difficulty. Following on the challenge of Lysander in line 255 and the quick retort of Demetrius, we have Hermia's wondering question, "Whereto tends all this?" (accompanied by the act of clinging to Lysander, so as to prevent the meeting of the rivals). Next comes Lysander's rough reply, "Away, you Ethiope!" and his unsuccessful attempt to thrust her aside. The words, "No, no! he'll [kill thee]" constitute Hermia's very natural and probable reply to her repulse by Lysander. After Hermia's intervention Demetrius resumes his interrupted taunt against Lysander. It is clear that one syllable at least, if not a foot, has fallen out of line 257, and the word "kill" seems to me far the most probable, and for two reasons chiefly: (1) it is nearer than any other word to the sound of "he 'll," if the compositor of Q 1 worked from dictation, and, if he worked from a MS., to the trace of its letters; in either case being inadvertently omitted; and (2), and this is the weightier reason, as an exclamation from Hermia it is the natural result of the antecedent passage between her and Demetrius, namely, lines 43–70 of this very scene, in which Hermia believes that her lover has been killed by Demetrius, who had already avowed to her his intention of killing Lysander. See, especially, lines 47 (slain), 56 (murdered), 66 (slain), and particularly 70 (kill'd). If the speech of *Her*mia was originally, as I believe, by the mistake of the printer of Q 1 wrongly assigned to *Dem*etrius, then the "Sir" of the Folio would appear to be merely a rude and unsuccessful attempt to account for and remedy a mistake the origin of which was misunderstood.

Or I will shake thee from me, like a serpent.

Her. Why are you grown so rude? what change is this,
Sweet love?

Lys. Thy love? out, tawny Tartar, out!
Out, loathed medicine! hated potion, hence!

Her. Do you not jest?

Hel. Yes, sooth; and so do you.

Lys. Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

Dem. I would I had your bond; for I perceive
A weak bond holds you; I 'll not trust your word.

Lys. What? should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, I 'll not harm her so.

Her. What, can you do me greater harm than hate?
Hate me! wherefore? O me! what means my love?

264. *hated*] Pope, *б hated* Qq, *O hated* Ff; *potion*] Q 1; *poison* Q 2, Ff. 271. *What . . . harm*] *What greater harm can you do me* Hanmer; *hate*] *harm* F 4. 272. *means*] Collier (ed. 2, 3), Singer (ed. 2), Keightley, Marshall; *newes* Qq, Ff.

263. *tawny*] another reference to Hermia's brown complexion.

268. *weak bond*] Hermia's arms still clinging round Lysander.

269. *What?*] the interrogative seems the preferable punctuation.

272. *wherefore?*] accented as in *Romeo and Juliet*, II. ii. 62, "tell me, and wherefore?"

272. *means*] I have no hesitation in adopting what Marshall calls "the very sensible emendation of the Collier MS." for the "newes" of the Qq, Ff. Marshall (*Irving Shakespeare*, vol. ii. 380) says: "I cannot find a single instance in which it" [*i.e.* the phrase "What news?" or "What news with you"] "is not addressed to some person who has only just appeared on the scene, and who may be expected by the speaker to have some message or matter of importance to communicate. . . . But Hermia in this speech is under the influence of strong emotion. She is shocked at Lysander saying that he hates her. Is it likely, under such circumstances, that she would employ such a colloquial phrase as 'What news'? Were she less in earnest, less deeply wounded, and playing the part of an indignant coquette, whose philanderings had been discovered, she might say, 'What new-fangled notion is this of your hating me?' But she is too much in earnest to play with words. The exclamation 'oh me!' is not one of skittish and affected suspense; it is a cry of real mental anguish; and I cannot think anyone with a due sense of dramatic fitness would admit the reading 'What news?' in the sense accepted by all the commentators." Strong confirmation of the change to "means" is to be found in line 236, *ante*, where Hermia uses the exact word in reference to Helena's accusation of Hermia's "setting Lysander to follow" her. Grant White (ed. 1) considers "that as this is Hermia's first interview with her lover since

Am not I Hermia? Are not you Lysander?
I am as fair now as I was erewhile.
Since night you loved me; yet since night you left me:
Why, then you left me,—O, the gods forbid!—
In earnest, shall I say?

Lys. Ay, by my life;
And never did desire to see thee more.
Therefore, be out of hope, of question, doubt,
Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest,
That I do hate thee, and love Helena.

Her. O me, you juggler! you canker-blossom!
You thief of love! what, have you come by night
And stol'n my love's heart from him?

Hel. Fine, i' faith!
Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie! you counterfeit, you puppet you!

Her. Puppet! why so? Ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare

279. *doubt*] Pope; *of doubt* Qq, Ff. Pope; *jugler, you! you* Capell. 289. *why so?*] Qq, Ff; *why, so:* Theobald. 282. *juggler! you*] *jugler, Oh you*

Puck's application of the flower to his eyes, she may well express surprise at the novelty of his declaration that he hates her." But surely this expression is brought out much more strongly by "means." Furness, *more suo*, "doggedly shuts his eyes to the substitution."

279. *doubt*] In support of Pope's omission of "of," Lettsom (*ap.* Dyce) aptly cites II. i. 238, "Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field."

282. *juggler!*] This word must be pronounced as a trisyllable. It was clearly so in Chaucer's time. See his *House of Fame*, iii. 169:

"Ther saugh I pley
Iugelours magiciens and tregetours."

282. *canker-blossom*] Capell is undoubtedly right in considering the first word of this compound to be a verb, *i.e.* "you who canker the blossom," meaning that Helena has stealthily destroyed the blossom of Lysander's affection for herself. See II. ii. 3, *ante*.

Between our statures, she hath urged her height;
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.—
And are you grown so high in his esteem,
Because I am so dwarfish and so low?
How low am I, thou painted maypole? speak;
How low am I? I am not yet so low,
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

Hel. I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me: I was never curst;
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;
I am a right maid for my cowardice;
Let her not strike me. You, perhaps, may think,
Because she is something lower than myself,
That I can match her.

Her. Lower! hark, again.

Hel. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.

292. *tall personage*] *tall parsonage* Q 2. 299. *gentlemen*] *gentleman* Q 1. 304. *she is*] Qq, F 1, 2, 3; *she's* F 4.

292. *And . . . personage*] There is no particular difficulty in the scansion of this line; nor is there any reason for special emphasis on the word "tall."

296. *painted maypole*] The epithet may refer to the pink and white complexion of Helena. Painted maypoles were of great antiquity. Steevens quotes Stubbes's *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1583: "These Oxen drawe home this May-pole (this stinking Ydol, rather), which is couered all ouer with floures and hearbs, bound round about with strings from the top to the bottome, and sometime painted with variable colours."

300. *curst*] shrewish, cross-grained, ill-tempered. Cotgrave: "Meschant. Wicked, impious, vngracious . . . also curst, mischievous, harsh, froward." Cf. line 341 of this scene, "Nor longer stay in your curst company"; line 439, "Here she comes, curst and sad"; and numerous other passages in the plays, particularly *Taming of the Shrew*. See also line 323, *post*, "keen and shrewd." Craig quotes from North's *Plutarch*, ed. 2, 1595, p. 1087 (Aratus): "he reported that the place was not unscaleable, but very hard to come to it, because of certaine little curst curres a gardiner kept hard by the wall, which would never leave barking."

302. *right*] true, down-*right*. Cf. *As You Like It*, III. ii. 103, "It is the right butter-women's rank to market"; IV. iii. 88, where the true reading is "like a right forester"; and *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV. xii. 28, "like a right gipsy."

I evermore did love you, Hermia,
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd you;
Save that, in love unto Demetrius,
I told him of your stealth unto this wood:
He follow'd you; for love, I follow'd him.
But he hath chid me hence; and threaten'd me
To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too:
And now, so you will let me quiet go,
To Athens will I bear my folly back,
And follow you no further: let me go:
You see how simple and how fond I am.

Her. Why, get you gone: who is 't that hinders you?

Hel. A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

Her. What, with Lysander?

Hel. With Demetrius.

Lys. Be not afraid: she shall not harm thee, Helena.

Dem. No, Sir; she shall not, though you take her part.

Hel. O, when she 's angry, she is keen and shrewd:
She was a vixen when she went to school;
And, though she be but little, she is fierce.

Her. Little again? nothing but low and little!
Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?
Let me come to her.

Lys. Get you gone, you dwarf;
You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made;

311. *follow'd*] Rowe; *followed* Qq, Ff. 313. *too*] *to* Qq. 320. Hel.] Her. F 1, 2. 321. *shall*] *will* F 4; *Helena*] *Helen* Dyce (ed. 2), (Walker conj.). 323. *she's*] *she is* Q 1. 329. *You minimus*] *You minion you* Theobald (ed. 2).

314. *so*] See I. i. 39.
317. *fond*] foolish, as in many passages in Shakespeare.
321. *Helena*] See II. ii. 103.
324. *when she went to school*] Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, I. ii. 300, "He was quick mettle when he went to school."
329. *minimus*] "a being of the least size." Johnson. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vii. 482, "minims of nature."

You bead, you acorn.

Dem. You are too officious
In her behalf, that scorns your services.
Let her alone; speak not of Helena;
Take not her part: for if thou dost intend
Never so little show of love to her,
Thou shalt aby it.

Lys. Now she holds me not;
Now follow, if thou dar'st, to try whose right,
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

Dem. Follow? nay, I 'll go with thee, cheek by jole.

[*Exeunt Lys. and Dem.*

Her. You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you:

335. *aby*] Q 1, *abie* Q 2, *abide* Ff. *Of mine or thine* Malone conj. [Exit] Q 2. Pope; Exit . . . Ff; omitted Qq. 337. *Of*] *Or* Theobald; *Of . . . mine*] 338. [Exeunt . . .] Exe. . . . 339. *'long*] Capell; *long* Qq, Ff.

"It came into use probably from the musical term 'minim,' which in the very old notation was the shortest note, though now one of the longest." Nares.

329. *hindering knot-grass*] "It appears," says Steevens, "that knot-grass was anciently supposed to prevent the growth of any animal or child." And he quotes Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle* (II. ii. 157, Dyce): "Should they put him into a straight pair of gaskins, 'twere worse than knot-grass; he would never grow after it"; and their *Coxcomb* (II. ii. 150, Dyce): "We want a boy extremely for this function, Kept under for a year with milk and knot-grass." Beisly, *Shakspere's Garden* (1864), 53, seems to be mistaken in thinking that "the allusion here made is to the 'character' of the plant as hindering the growth of useful plants; as it spreads in thick masses, and is very tough and deep-rooted." Ellacombe, *Plant Lore of Shakespeare* (1878), 101, says: "The *Polygonum aviculare*, a British weed, low straggling and many-jointed, hence its name of knot-grass. There may be another explanation of hindering than that given by Steevens. Johnstone tells us that in the North, being difficult to cut in the harvest-time, or to pull in the process of weeding, it has obtained the soubriquet of the Deil's-lingels. From this it may well be called 'hindering,' just as the *Ononis*, from the same habit of catching the plough and harrow, has obtained the prettier name of Rest-harrow."

333. *intend*] here, probably, to set forth, exhibit; or, to pretend, as in *Much Ado*, II. ii. 35, "Intend a kind of zeal," and other passages.

335. *aby*] See line 175, *supra*.

337. *Of*] See, for a similar construction, *The Tempest*, II. i. 27, "Which, of he or Adrian, for a good wager, first begins to crow?"

339. *coil*] stir, tumult, turmoil, as in numerous other passages of Shakespeare.

339. *'long*] owing to you, as in *Cymbeline*, V. v. 271, "and 'long of her it was."

Nay, go not back.

Hel. I will not trust you, I,
Nor longer stay in your curst company.
Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray;
My legs are longer though, to run away. [*Exit.*

Her. I am amazed, and know not what to say. [*Exit.*

Obe. This is thy negligence: still thou mistak'st,
Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

Puck. Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.
Did not you tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garments he had on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprise,
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes:
And so far am I glad it so did sort,
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

Obe. Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to fight:
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
The starry welkin cover thou anon
With drooping fog, as black as Acheron;
And lead these testy rivals so astray,
As one come not within another's way.

340. *you, I,*] *you* Rowe (ed. 1). 343. [Exit] Capell; omitted Qq, Ff; Exeunt Rowe; Exeunt Herm. pursuing Helena Theobald. 344. Her. *I . . . say*] omitted **Ff.** [Exit] Capell; Exeunt Qq; Exit pursuing Helena Malone. 345. *Scene* IX.] Pope; *Scene* VIII. Warburton. Enter Oberon and Puck Ff. 346. *wilfully*] Qq, *willingly* Ff. 349. *had*] Q 1; *hath* Q 2, Ff. 351. *'nointed*] *nointed* Qq, Ff. 352. *so did*] *did so* Rowe. 357. *fog*] *fogs* Theobald (ed. 2).

344.] This line was accidentally omitted in Ff, and hence no *exit* is provided for Hermia or Helena.

353. *As*] *i.e.* since, because.

357. *Acheron*] In classical mythology, the infernal river, perhaps used loosely by Shakespeare and other early poets for river or lake. See *Titus Andronicus*, IV. iii. 44, "I'll dive into the burning lake below, And pull her out of Acheron by the heels" (if this is in fact Shakespeare's authorship); and *Macbeth*, III. v. 15, "at the pit of Acheron." But the comparison Shakespeare here makes is in respect of "blackness."

Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue,
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong;
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius;
And from each other look thou lead them thus,
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye;
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
To take from thence all error, with his might,
And make his eyeballs roll with wonted sight.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream, and fruitless vision;
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,
With league whose date till death shall never end.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I 'll to my queen, and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste;
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger;

364. *death-counterfeiting*] (with comma) Q 2, F 1; *death-counterfaiting*, Q 1. 368. *his*] *its* Rowe. 374. *employ*] *imploy* Q 1, F 4; *apply* Q 2; *imply* F 1, 2, 3. 379. *night's swift*] *nights swift* Q 1; *night swift* Q 2; *night-swift* F 1; *nights-swift* F 2, 3, 4.

367. *virtuous*] powerful, efficacious. So, in the legal language of conveyancing even at the present day, "under and by virtue of every power, etc."

379. *dragons*] Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, v. viii. 17, "The dragon wing of night o'erspreads the earth"; and *Cymbeline*, II. ii. 48, "Swift, swift, you dragons of the night." Steevens says: "The task of drawing the chariot of the night was assigned to dragons on account of their supposed watchfulness." Malone refers to Golding's *Ovid's Metamorphosis*, "And brought asleep the dragon fell, whose eyes were never shet." For "cut the clouds," cf. *Tempest*, IV. i. 93, of Venus "cutting the clouds towards Paphos."

At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to churchyards: damned spirits all,
That in cross-ways and floods have burial,
Already to their wormy beds are gone;
For fear lest day should look their shames upon,
They wilfully themselves exile from light,
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

Obe. But we are spirits of another sort:
I with the morning's love have oft made sport:
And, like a forester, the groves may tread,
Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red,

386. *themselves exile*] *exile themselves* F 3, 4; *exil'd themselves* Theobald conj. [beginning Oberon's speech here]. 387. *black-brow'd*] *black browed* Q 1. 389. *morning's love*] Qq, F 1; *morning love* F 2, 3, 4; *morning-love* Rowe (ed. 1); *morning-light* Rowe (ed. 2).

382, 383. *damned spirits . . . burial*] Steevens says: "The ghosts of self-murderers, who are buried in cross-roads, and of those who, being drowned, were condemned (according to the opinion of the ancients) to wander for a hundred years, as the rites of sepulture had never been regularly bestowed on their bodies." That the waters were sometimes the place of residence for "damned spirits" we learn from the ancient bl. l. [black letter] romance of *Syr Eglamoure of Artoys* (no date): "Let some preest a gospel saye, For doute of fendes in the flode."

386.] It was distinctly ingenious of Theobald to propose to begin Oberon's speech here.

387. *black-brow'd*] Cf. *King John*, v. vi. 17, "Here walk I in the black brow of night"; and *Romeo and Juliet*, III. ii. 20, "Come, loving, black-brow'd night."

389. *the morning's love*] It is highly probable that Cephalus, the lover of Aurora (Milton's "Attic boy," *Il Penseroso*, 124), is here intended, especially having regard to Bottom's reference to "Shafalus" in v. i. 198. This shows at least that the myth was in Shakespeare's mind. So in *The Phœnix Nest*, 1593:

"Aurora now began to rise againe
From watrie couch and from old Tithon's side,
In hope to kisse upon Acteian plaine
Yong Cephalus."

Capell suggests that the expression may mean the star Phosphorus; Steevens that it is Tithonus, the husband of Aurora. Halliwell aptly remarks: "Oberon merely means to say metaphorically that he has sported with Aurora, the morning's love, the first blush of morning; and that he is not, like a ghost, compelled to vanish at the dawn of day."

391. *eastern gate*] Milton's *L'Allegro*, 59, is well known:

"Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great Sun begins his state."

Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.
But, notwithstanding, haste; make no delay:
We may effect this business yet ere day. [*Exit.*

Puck. Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down:
I am fear'd in field and town;
Goblin, lead them up and down.
Here comes one.

Re-enter LYSANDER.

Lys. Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.
Puck. Here, villain; drawn and ready. Where art thou?
Lys. I will be with thee straight.
Puck. Follow me, then,
To plainer ground. [*Exit Lys. as following the voice.*

Re-enter DEMETRIUS.

Dem. Lysander! speak again.
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?

392. *Neptune with . . . beams*] Qq, Ff; *Neptune, with . . . beams* Walker conj.; *fair blessed*] *far-blessing* Hanmer (Warburton). 395. [Exit] Exit Oberon Rowe; omitted Qq, Ff. 396–399. *Up . . . down*] as in Pope [two lines Q 1; prose Q 2, Ff]. 396. *down,*] *down then,* Hanmer. 399. *Goblin . . . down*] Oberon, Collier conj. (omitting Exit in 395). 400, 404. Re-enter . . .] Capell; Enter . . . Qq, Ff. 401. *Where . . . now*] Qq [two lines Ff]. 403, 404. *Follow . . . ground*] as in Theobald [one line Qq, Ff]. 404. [Exit . . . voice] Exit Lys. . . . voice, which seems to go off Capell; Lys. goes out, as following Dem. Theobald; omitted Qq, Ff.

392.] The punctuation of Walker (*Crit.* iii. 49) is noteworthy. Cf. *Sonnets,* xxxiii., "Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy."

399.] This line might belong to Oberon if he remains on the stage. His *exit,* if at line 395, is not marked in the Qq, Ff. If Puck is the speaker, possibly "I" is understood before "Goblin," unless "will" is understood after it. There is much, however, to be said for Staunton's idea that the line is none other than a self-conferred nickname on Robin Goodfellow, to indicate his will-o'-the-wisp propensities, and that the line should be read, "Goblin-lead-them-up-and-down."

402. *drawn*] *i.e.* with sword drawn.

Speak! In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?

Puck. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,
And wilt not come? Come, recreant; come, thou child;
I'll whip thee with a rod: he is defiled
That draws a sword on thee.

Dem. Yea; art thou there?

Puck. Follow my voice; we'll try no manhood here.

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter LYSANDER.

Lys. He goes before me, and still dares me on;
When I come where he calls, then he is gone.
The villain is much lighter heel'd than I:
I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly;
That fallen am I in dark uneven way,
And here will rest me. Come, thou gentle day!

[*Lies down.*

For if but once thou shew me thy grey light,
I'll find Demetrius, and revenge this spite.

[*Sleeps.*

Re-enter PUCK *and* DEMETRIUS.

Puck. Ho, ho! ho, ho! Coward, why com'st thou not?

406. *Speak! In some bush?*] Capell; *Speake in some bush.* Qq; *Speake in some bush:* Ff. 407. *bragging*] *begging* F 3, 4. 412. [Exeunt] Qq, Exit Ff. Re-enter . . .] Capell; Lysander comes back Theobald; omitted Qq, Ff. 414. *calls, then he is*] *calles, then he is* Q 1; *calles, then he's* Q 2; *cals, then he's* F 1; *cals me, then he's* F 2, 3, 4. 416. *follow'd*] Rowe; *followed* Qq, Ff; [Shifting places] Ff. 418. [Lies down] lye down Ff; omitted Qq. 420. [Sleeps] Capell. Re-enter . . .] Capell; Enter Robin . . . Ff; Robin, and Demetrius Q 1. 421. *Ho, . . . ho!*] Capell; *Ho, ho, ho!* Qq, Ff; *why*] *why then* Hanmer.

421. *Ho, ho! ho, ho!*] the established burden to the old songs which describe the frolics of Robin Good-fellow. Ritson, in his note on this passage (*Remarks*, 1783), gives numerous instances of the devil, who was generally one of the leading characters in the old miracle plays and moralities, ex-

Dem. Abide me, if thou dar'st; for well I wot,
Thou runn'st before me, shifting every place,
And dar'st not stand, nor look me in the face.
Where art thou now?

Puck. Come hither; I am here.

Dem. Nay, then, thou mock'st me. Thou shalt buy this dear,
If ever I thy face by daylight see:
Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me
To measure out my length on this cold bed.
By day's approach look to be visited.

[*Lies down and sleeps.*

Re-enter HELENA.

Hel. O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Abate thy hours! shine, comforts, from the east;
That I may back to Athens, by daylight,
From these that my poor company detest:

425. *now*] Q 1; omitted Q 2, Ff. 426. *shalt*] *shat* Q 1; *buy*] Qq, Ff; *by* Collier (Johnson conj.). 429. [Lies down] Capell. 430. [Lies . . .] Malone; Lyes down Rowe; Sleeps Capell. Re-enter . . .] Dyce; Enter . . . Qq, Ff; Enter Helena and throws herself down Capell. 431. *Scene x.*] Pope. 432. *shine, comforts,*] Theobald; *shine comforts,* Q 1; *shine comforts* Q 2, Ff.

pressing his fiendish laughter in this form; *e.g.* in *Gammer Gurton's Needle,* "But Diccon, Diccon, did not the devil cry ho, ho, ho?"

426. *buy this dear*] "Johnson conjectured 'by' for 'aby,' as in lines 175, 335, but the phrase, if a corruption, was so well established in Shakespeare's time as to make a change unnecessary. Compare, for instance, *1 Henry IV.* v. iii. 7:

'The Lord of Stafford dear to day hath bought
Thy likeness';

and *2 Henry VI.* II. i. 100, 'Too true; and bought his climbing very dear.' Besides the two words are etymologically connected." Wright.

429. *measure . . . length*] Cf. *King Lear,* I. iv. 99, "If you will measure your lubber's length again."

432. *shine, comforts,*] Theobald's punctuation seems preferable, *i.e.* making "comforts" a vocative, like "night."

434. *detest*] Walker (*Crit.* ii. 311) says: "In writers of [Shakespeare's] age 'detest' is used in the sense which, as then, it still retained from its original 'detestari,' being indicative

And sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye,
Steal me a while from mine own company.

[*Lies down and sleeps.*

Puck. Yet but three? Come one more;
Two of both kinds makes up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad:
Cupid is a knavish lad,
Thus to make poor females mad.

Re-enter HERMIA.

Her. Never so weary, never so in woe;
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers;
I can no further crawl, no further go;
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.
Here will I rest me till the break of day.
Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray!

[*Lies down and sleeps.*

Puck. On the ground,
Sleep sound:

435. *sometimes*] Qq, F 3, 4; *sometime* F 1, 2. 436. [Lies . . .] Dyce; Sleepe Qq, Ff; Sleeps Rowe. 437. *three?*] *three here?* Hanmer; *Come one*] Qq, Ff; *Come but one* Editor conj. 438. *makes*] Qq, F 1, 2, 4; *make* F 3. 439. *comes*] *cometh* Hanmer, Editor conj. 441. Re-enter . . .] Dyce; Enter H. F 3, 4; Enter H. [after 440] F 1, 2. 446. *me*] *me*, [lies down] Capell. 447. *Heavens*] *Heaven* Anon. conj. [Lies . . .] Dyce; Lyes down Rowe; omitted Qq, Ff. 448. [To Lysander, whose Eyes he anoints] Capell. 448–457. *On . . . eye*] as in Warburton; four lines in Qq, Ff. 449. *Sleep*] *Sleep thou* Hanmer.

of something spoken, not of an affection of the mind; compare 'attest,' 'protest,' which still retain their etymological meaning." Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, Book ii. [xxiii. 47, p. 248, ed. Aldis Wright], speaking of secrecy in matters of government, "Again, the wisdom of antiquity . . . in the description of torments and pains . . . doth detest the offence of facility." ["facilitie" in the edition of 1605 is corrected to "futilitie" in the Errata, and the correction is adopted in edd. 1629, 1633. See Wright's note.]

I 'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.
[*Squeezing the juice on Lysander's eye.*
When thou wakest,
Thou takest
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye:
And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown:
Jack shall have Jill;
Nought shall go ill;
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well. [*Exit.*

451. *To your eye*] Rowe; *your eye* Qq, Ff. 452. [Squeezing . . .] Rowe. 453. *wakest*] *wakest next* Hanmer. 454. *Thou*] *Then thou* Seymour conj.; *See thou* Collier (ed. 2) (Tyrwhitt conj.); *takest*] Qq, F 1, 4; *rak'st* F 2, 3. 461, 462. *Jack . . . ill*] as in Johnson [one line Qq, Ff]. 463. *well*] *still* Steevens conj. [They sleepe all the Act] Ff.

450. *apply To*] The Qq, Ff omit "To," but in almost every other passage in which the word occurs it is used with "to." It is used with "in" in *As You Like It*, II. iii. 48, "I never did apply Hot and rebellious liquors 'in' my blood."

461. *Jack shall have Jill*] Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 884:

"Our wooing doth not end like an old play;
Jack hath not Jill."

Steevens says the proverb is to be found in Heywood's *Epigrammes upon Proverbes*, 1567:

"All shalbe well, Iacke shall haue Gill:
Nay, nay, Gill is wedded to Wyll."

And Staunton cites instances from Skelton's *Magnyfycence* (Dyce's ed., i. 234) and elsewhere. In *Taming of the Shrew*, IV. i. 51, there is a play on the words jacks and jills, which there signify two drinking measures, as well as men-servants and maid-servants.

463. *The man . . . be well*] probably another proverbial expression. Wright compares Fletcher's *Chances*, III. iv.:

"*Fred.* How now? How goes it?
John. Why, the man has his mare again, and all 's well, Frederic."

And see Ray's *English Proverbs*, "All is well, and the man hath his mare again." The stage-direction of the Folio seems to imply that the sleepers continue to sleep up to line 140 of Act IV. sc. i.

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*The Same.*

Lysander, Demetrius, Helena, and Hermia, lying asleep.

Enter TITANIA *and* BOTTOM; PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTE, MUSTARD-SEED, *and other Fairies attending;* OBERON *behind unseen.*

Tita. Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

Bot. Where 's Peaseblossom? 5

Peas. Ready.

Bot. Scratch my head, Peaseblossom. Where 's Mounsieur Cobweb?

Cob. Ready.

Act IV. Scene I.] Rowe. Actus Quartus Ff; omitted Qq. The Same . . .] The Same. The Lovers, at a Distance, asleep, Capell. The Wood Pope. Enter . . .] Enter Queene of Faieries, and Clowne, and Faieries: and the King behinde them Qq, Ff. 1. [seating him on a Bank] Capell. 7, 8. *Mounsieur*] Qq, Ff; *Monsieur* Rowe.

Act IV.] Johnson says: "I see no reason why the Fourth Act should begin here, when there seems no interruption of the action." But Furness aptly remarks: "It is precisely because there is so little 'interruption of the action' that it is necessary to have an interruption of time, which this division supplies. At the close of the last scene the stage is pitch-dark, doubly black through Puck's charms, and a change to daylight is rendered less violent by a new Act."

2. *coy*] caress. See Golding's *Ovid*, vii. (p. 82, ed. 1567), "Their dangling Dewlaps with his hand he coyd vnfearfully"; Peele's *Arraignment of Paris*, III. i. (ed. Dyce):

" Lo, yonder comes the lovely nymph,
that in these Ida vales
Plays with Amyntas' lusty boy, and coys him in the dales!"

and Warner's *Albion's England*, vi. 30 (ed. 1602), "And whilst she coyes his sooty cheekes, or curles his sweaty top."

4. *my gentle joy*] Cf. II. i. 27, "makes him [the changeling] all her joy."

Bot. Mounsieur Cobweb; good mounsieur, get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good mounsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, mounsieur; and, good mounsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loth to have you overflown with a honey-bag, signior. Where's mounsieur Mustard-seed?

Mus. Ready.

Bot. Give me your neaf, mounsieur Mustard-seed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good mounsieur.

Mus. What's your will?

Bot. Nothing, good mounsieur, but to help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's, mounsieur; for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face: and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

Tita. What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?

10. *get your*] Q 1; *get* Q 2, Ff. 17. *overflown*] *overflow'd* Malone conj. 20. *your*] *thy* Pope; *neaf*] *neafe* Qq, F 1; *newfe* F 2; *newse* F 3; *news* F 4. *Mustard-seed*] Qq, F 1, 2; *Mustard* F 2, 4. 21. *courtesy*] *curtsie* Q 1; *courtesie* Q 2, F 1, 2; *curtesie* F 3, 4. 24. *Cavalery*] Qq, F 1; *cavalero* F 2, 3, 4. 25. *Cobweb*] *Peaseblossom* Rann (Anon. *ap.* Grey conj.). 26. *marvellous*] *maruailes* Q 1; *maruailous* Q 2; *marvels* Capell. 28. *do*] *doth* Rowe (ed. 2). 29. *some*] *some some* Q 2.

20. *neaf*] fist; Icel. *knefi*. Cf. *2 Henry IV.* II. iv. 200, "Sweet knight, I kiss thy neif."

21. *leave your courtesy*] *i.e.* dispense with compliment, put on your hat. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. i. 103, "remember thy courtesy; I beseech thee, apparel thy head."

24, 25. *Cavalery Cobweb*] Cobweb here is probably a mistake for Peaseblossom, as Cobweb had already been dispatched against the humble-bee; unless indeed we are to suppose that Bottom is in fact addressing Peaseblossom, but gives him the wrong name.

Bot. I have a reasonable good ear in music: let's have the tongs and the bones.

Tita. Or say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat.

Bot. Truly, a peck of provender: I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks, I have a great desire to a bottle of hay: good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

Tita. I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee newest nuts.

30. *let's*] *Lets* Q 1; *Let us* Q 2, Ff. 31. *tongs*] *tongues* F 2. Musicke Tongs, Rurall Musicke. Ff; omitted Qq. 37, 38] as in Hanmer; Q 1 has two lines, ending *hoord* and *nuts*; Q 2, Ff three lines, ending *Fairy*, *hoard*, *nuts*. 38. *thee*] *thee thence* Hanmer, *thee the* Walker conj., *for thee* Collier conj.; *newest*] Kinnear conj., *newe* Qq, *new* Ff, *mellow* Craig conj.

31. *the tongs and the bones*] "The *music* of the tongs was produced, I believe, by striking them with a key, while the bones were played upon by rattling them between the fingers." Dyce.

31. Musicke Tongs, Rurall Musicke] "This scenical direction," says Capell, "is certainly an interpolation of the players, as no such direction appears in either Quarto, and Titania's reply is a clear exclusion of it."

32. *Or say . . . eat*] This line is printed as prose in the Globe and Cambridge editions, wrongly so I think, as all Titania's speeches are in verse. Marshall remarks that "*desirest* is not elided in F 1; but it is almost certain this line was intended for verse, the non-elision being accidental."

35. *bottle of hay*] "bottle" is the diminutive of the French *botte*, a bundle, of hay, flax, etc. Halliwell says "a bottle of hay was not a mere 'bundle,' but some measure of provender . . . In a court-book dated 1551, the halfpenny bottle of hay is stated to weigh two pounds and a half, and the penny bottle five pounds." Cotgrave, "Boteler. To bottle, or bundle up; to make into bottles, or bundles." Cf. Chaucer, *Manciple's Tale*, Words of the Pilgrims, line 14, "Although it be nat worth a botel hey"; and the common proverb, "to look for a needle in a bottle of hay." The phrase "a bottle of straw," as Craig remarks, is in common use in the north of Ireland. See *Eng. Dial. Dict.*, *s.v.*

36. *no fellow*] Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, III. i. 62, "There is no fellow in the firmament."

38. *newest*] the conjecture of Kinnear. Titania, in her desire to gratify Bottom, would naturally seek to bribe him with the newest and freshest nuts. A syllable *must* have dropped out of the line; and on account of the similarity between "thee" and "thence" there is much to be said for the reading of Hanmer; but the addition of "thence" adds nothing to the meaning, and has the effect of removing all stress from the adjective,—a distinct loss. It is possible, not to say probable, that, having regard to the spelling of the Qq, *i.e.* "newe," the final letters of "newest" (*-st*) may have been omitted in the Qq from confusion with the final letters of "nuts" (*-ts*). In any case, Shakespeare uses the superlative form half a dozen times, *e.g.* *Tempest*, II. ii. 28, "the newest poor-John."

Bot. I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas.
But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me;
I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.
Tita. Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.
Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away.
[*Exeunt Fairies.*
So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwist; the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.

43. *all ways*] Theobald; *alwaies* Qq, F 1; *alwayes* F 2, 3; *always* F 4; *a while* Hanmer; *away*] *i' th' way* Heath conj. [Exeunt . . .] Capell; omitted Qq, Ff. 44, 45. *woodbine . . . entwist;*] *woodbine, . . . Honisuckle, . . . entwist:* Q 1; *woodbine, . . . Honisuckle, . . . entwist;* Q 2, Ff; *woodbine*] *weedbind* Steevens conj. 45. *entwist; the female*] *entwist the maple;* Theobald (Warburton conj.). 45, 46. *entwist; . . . Enrings*] *entwist, . . . Enring,* Capell.

43. *all ways*] *i.e.* as Theobald says, "disperse yourselves that danger approach us from no quarter."

44, 45. *woodbine . . . entwist*] The general idea here meant to be conveyed is clear enough; the difficulty lies in ascertaining exactly what plant Shakespeare meant by "woodbine." It is used by him in only two other passages, namely, in II. i. 251 of this play, "Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine," where it must mean "honeysuckle"; and in *Much Ado*, III. i. 30, of Beatrice, "couched in the woodbine coverture," obviously referring to line 7 of that scene:

"the pleached bower,
Where honeysuckles, ripened by the sun,
Forbid the sun to enter."

Steevens supposed that "the sweet honeysuckle" is in opposition to "woodbine," and that "entwist," as well as "enrings," governs the "barky fingers of the elm." The alternative, and only satisfactory, solution is to take woodbine as a different plant from honeysuckle. Gifford, in his note on the passage in Ben Jonson's *Vision of Delight*, a Masque, 1617 (Works, vii. 308)—

"behold!
How the blue bindweed doth itself infold
With honey-suckle, and both these intwine
Themselves with bryony and jessamine"—

says: "This passage settles the meaning of the speech of Titania in a *Midsummer-Night's Dream* . . . The woodbine of Shakespeare is the blue bindweed of Jonson; in many of our counties the woodbine is still the name for the great convolvulus." As bindweed is the popular name for the convolvulus, notwithstanding that it is also used of other climbing plants, *e.g.* smilax, bitter sweet, ivy, etc., it is probable that by the "blue bindweed" Jonson meant the common purple (or blue) convolvulus. See Gerard, *Herball* (1597), 864. "On the whole," says Marshall, "considering the lax use of the word 'woodbine,' we must take it to mean some other plant than the honeysuckle, probably the *Convolvulus sepium.*" See Ellacombe, *Plant Lore of Shakespeare*, 1896, p. 131.

45. *female ivy*] So Catullus, 62. 54, of the vine, "ulmo conjuncta marito."

O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee!

[*They sleep.*

Enter PUCK.

Obe. [*Advancing.*] Welcome, good Robin. See'st thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity:
For meeting her of late, behind the wood,
Seeking sweet favours for this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her and fall out with her:
For she his hairy temples then had rounded
With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;
And that same dew, which sometime on the buds
Was wont to swell, like round and orient pearls,
Stood now within the pretty flowerets' eyes,
Like tears, that did their own disgrace bewail.
When I had at my pleasure taunted her,
And she, in mild terms, begg'd my patience,
I then did ask of her her changeling child;
Which straight she gave me, and her fairies sent

47. [They sleep] Capell; omitted Qq, Ff. Enter Puck] Rowe; Enter Robin Goodfellow Qq; Enter Robin Goodfellow and Oberon Ff; Oberon advances. Enter Puck Capell. 48. [Advancing] Collier; as in Qq; two lines Ff. 51. *favours*] Q 1; *favors* F 4; *sauors* Q 2, F 1; *savors* F 2, 3. 57. *flowerets'*] *flouriets* Qq, Ff; *flouret's* Johnson; *flourets'* Steevens (1793). 62. *fairies*] Dyce; *fairy* Qq, Ff.

Wright compares Fairfax's *Tasso*, iii. 75, "The married Elme fell with his fruitfull vine." See also *Comedy of Errors*, II. ii. 176, "Thou art an elm, my husband. I a vine."

51. *favours*] love-tokens. So in many passages of Shakespeare, *e.g.* II. i. 12 of this play. Dyce (*Notes*, 62) says: "I think 'favours' decidedly right. Titania was seeking flowers for Bottom to wear as 'favours.' Compare Greene, 'These [fair women] with syren-like allurement entised these quaint squires, that they bestowed all their 'flowers' vpon them for 'favours.' *Quip for an Vpstart Courtier*, Sig. B 2, ed. 1620."

56. *orient*] Cf. *Richard III.* IV. iv. 322, "liquid drops of tears . . . transformed to orient pearl"; and *Venus and Adonis*, 981, "Yet sometimes falls an orient drop." Craig refers to Drayton, *Polyolbion*, song, v. 17:

"The path was strew'd with pearls
which though they orient were
Yet scarce known from her feet,
they were so wondrous clear."

To bear him to my bower in fairy land.
And now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes.
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp
From off the head of this Athenian swain;
That, he awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again repair;
And think no more of this night's accidents
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the fairy queen.
Be as thou wast wont to be;
See as thou wast wont to see:
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower
Hath such force and blessed power.
Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet queen.

Tita. My Oberon! what visions have I seen!
Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

67. *off*] *of* Q 1; *this*] *the* Johnson. 68. *That, he*] *That hee* Q 1; *That he* Q 2, Ff; *other*] *others* Rowe. 69. *May all*] *All may* Grey conj. 73. *Be*] Qq, *Be thou* Ff. [touching her Eyes with an Herb] Capell; Anointing her Eyes Collier (ed. 2). 75. *o'er*] Theobald (Thirlby conj.); *or* Qq, Ff.

73. 74. *Be . . . be; See . . . see*] "A sort of repetition which Puttenham (*The Arte of English Poesie*, iii. 19) calls Epanalepsis, or the Echo sound, and thus describes: Ye have another sort of repetition, when ye make one worde both beginne and end your verse, which therefore I call the slow retourne, otherwise the Echo sound, as thus:

Much must he be loued, that loveth much,
Feare many must he needs, whom many feare.

Unless I call him the echo sound, I could not tell what name to give him, unlesse it were the slow retourne." Rushton, *Shakespeare Illustrated*, part ii. p. 19.

75. *Dian's bud*] Steevens says: "This is the bud of the *Agnus Castus* or *Chaste Tree*. Thus in Macer's *Herball*, the vertue of this herbe is, that he wyll kepe man and woman chaste." So Chaucer in *The Flower and the Leaf*, 473:

"That is Diane, goddesse of chastitie,
And for because that she a maiden is,
In her hond the braunch she beareth this,
That *Agnus castus* men call properly."

75. *Cupid's flower*] the pansy, the "little western flower" of II. i. 166, and II. ii. 27, *ante*.

Obe. There lies your love.

Tita. How came these things to pass? 80
O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!

Obe. Silence, a while.—Robin, take off this head.—
Titania, music call; and strike more dead
Than common sleep of all these five the sense.

Tita. Music, ho! music; such as charmeth sleep. 85
[*Music, still.*

Puck. Now, when thou wakest, with thine own fool's eyes peep.

Obe. Sound, music! Come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.
Now thou and I are new in amity,
And will, to-morrow midnight, solemnly 90
Dance in duke Theseus' house triumphantly,
And bless it to all fair posterity:

81. *do*] *doth* Q 2, F 1; *his*] Q 1; *this* Q 2, Ff. 82. *this*] Qq, *his* Ff. 84. *sleep of all these five*] Theobald (Thirlby conj.); *sleepe: of all these, fine* Qq, F 1, 2; *sleep; of all these find* F 3, 4; *sleep. Of all these fine* Rowe (ed. 2). 85. *ho!*] *howe* Q 1. [Music, still] Musick still Ff; omitted Qq; Still Musick Theobald. 86. *Now, when thou wakest*] Q 1; *When thou wak'st* Q 2, F 1; *When thou awak'st* F 2, 3, 4. 92. *fair posterity*] Q 2, Ff; *fair prosperity* Q 1; *far posterity* Hanmer (Warburton).

83. *dead*] Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, IV. iii. 267, "O murderous slumber!" and *Tempest*, V. i. 230, "We were dead of sleep."

84. *these five*] *i.e.* Hermia, Helena, Lysander, Demetrius, Bottom.

85. Music, still] Dyce (*Remarks*, 48) says: "'Music still' is nothing more than *still music*; . . . the music, instead of 'ceasing before Puck spoke' (Collier), was not intended to commence at all till Oberon had said 'Sound music!' The stage-direction here (as we frequently find in early editions of plays) was placed prematurely, to warn the musicians to be in readiness."

88. *rock the ground*] See Introduction, and III. ii. 25, "at our stamp."

89. *new*] newly. Cf. *Hamlet*, II. ii. 510, "Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work."

92. *posterity*] I think the balance sways, though slightly, in favour of the reading of Q 2, Ff, and chiefly on account of the greater emphasis which it gives to "fair." The blessing is clearly amplified in 400–411 of V. i. "I prefer the present text," says Furness. "It involves a larger blessing. To Theseus's marriage the fairies bring present triumph, but on his house they confer the blessing of a fair posterity." Malone and most editors prefer the "prosperity" of Q 1, probably on the strength of II. i. 73, "To give their bed joy and prosperity."

There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

Puck. Fairy king, attend and mark:
I do hear the morning lark.

Obe. Then, my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after nightës shade;
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wandering moon.

Tita. Come, my lord; and in our flight,
Tell me how it came this night,
That I sleeping here was found,
With these mortals on the ground.

[*Exeunt. Horns winded within.*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS, *and train.*

The. Go, one of you, find out the forester;
For now our observation is perform'd:
And since we have the vaward of the day,
My love shall hear the music of my hounds.
Uncouple in the western valley; go,

93. *the*] Qq, F 1; *these* F 2, 3, 4. 95. *Fairy*] Qq; *Faire* F 1, 2; *Fair* F 3, 4. 97. *sad*] *fade* Theobald; *staid* Daniel conj. 98. *nightës*] *nights* Q 1; *the nights* Q 2, Ff; *the night's* Rowe. 103.] Here the Ff give the stage-direction "Sleepers Lye still." 104. [Horns . . . within] Winde horne Q 1; Winde hornes Q 2, Ff. 105. *Scene II.*] Pope. Enter . . . and train] Enter . . . and all his traine Ff; Enter Theseus and all his traine Qq. 109. *Uncouple . . . go*] *Uncouple . . . let them go* Qq, Ff; *let them* omitted Pope; *Let them uncouple in the western valley: Go;* Capell conj.; *Uncouple*] *Uncoupl'd* Anon. *ap.* Rann conj.

97. *sad*] grave, serious. See II. i. 51, "saddest tale"; III. ii. 237, "sad looks"; III. ii. 439, "curst and sad"; V. i. 286, "to make a man look sad"; *As You Like It*, III. ii. 227, "speak, sad brow, and true maid"; and many other passages. The rhyme is imperfect, but not inferior to several in this play.

98. *nightës*] Cf. "moonës," II. i. 7 and note thereon.

106. *observation*] See I. i. 167.

107. *vaward*] van (properly of an army) *prima acies*. Coles's *Lat. and Eng. Dict.*

109. *Uncouple, etc.*] It is very doubtful whether we have this line in the Qq, Ff as it left Shakespeare's hand. No

Despatch, I say, and find the forester. [*Exit an Attend.*
We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top,
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

Hip. I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,
When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the boar

110. [Exit . . .] Dyce; omitted Qq, Ff. 115. *boar*] Hanmer (Theobald conj.); *bear* Qq, Ff.

other Alexandrine, or apparent Alexandrine, occurs in this play, and various efforts have been made to emend the line. Pope left out "let them," and he is followed by Dyce and most other editors. Marshall omits "western," on the ground that there is no particular meaning in "the western valley." On the contrary, it appears to me to give a certain local colour, and ought to be retained; whereas "let them" is useless to the sense, as all that is required is already expressed in the single word "uncouple." Cf. the only other passage in Shakespeare in which the word occurs (if indeed Shakespeare be responsible for it), namely, *Titus Andronicus*, II. ii. 3, "Uncouple here and let us make a bay." "Go" in this line is, I think, imperative, just as in line 105; and the above passage in *Titus Andronicus* increases the suspicion that the insertion of the words "let them" is a mere blunder and interpolation of a compositor ignorant of the exact meaning of "uncouple," and fancying that "go" was an infinitive and not an imperative.

114. *Hercules*] The chronology which brings Cadmus with Hercules and Hippolyta into the hunting-field together may be left to adjust itself, as Wright remarks.

115. *the boar*] This is the suggestion of Theobald, adopted by Hanmer, Capell, Dyce, Walker, and Hudson. On the other hand, we have the great authority of the Qq, Ff and the opinions of Steevens, Malone, Wright, and others in favour of retaining "bear." Steevens, in defence of "bear," refers to the painting in the temple of Mars of "The hunte strangled with the wilde beeres," Chaucer, *Knightes Tale*, line 1160 (ed. Morris), 2018 (ed. Pollard), and observes, "Bear-baiting was likewise once a diversion esteemed proper for royal personages, even of the softer sex." Malone refers to Antigonus in *The Winter's Tale* (III. iii.) being destroyed by a bear, which is chased by hunters. He also cites *Venus and Adonis*, 883:

> "For now she knows it is no gentle chase,
> But the blunt boar, rough bear, or lion proud."

Tollet quotes Holinshed, Pliny, Plutarch, etc., as mentioning "bear-hunting"; and Wright thinks the references to "bear" and "bear-hunting" in Shakespeare are sufficiently numerous to justify the old reading. For the reading "boar" it may be urged that the misprint of "e" for "o" was "the easiest of all misprints in Shakespeare's time," as White (ed. 1) justly remarks. As to the quotation from Chaucer, it is somewhat remarkable that the Harl. MS. reads, "The huntë strangled with wilde 'bores' corage"; Morris in his note, however, considering this reading as corrupt, "for the 'boar' does not strangle." Theobald remarks that "the Erymanthian boar was famous among the Herculean labours"; and Capell that "in penning this passage, the poet appears to have had in his eye the 'boar' of Thessaly, and to have picked up some ideas from the famous description of that hunting"; and Walker

With hounds of Sparta: never did I hear
Such gallant chiding; for, besides the groves,
The skies, the mountains, every region near
Seem'd all one mutual cry: I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.
The. My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
So flew'd, so sanded; and their heads are hung

118. *mountains*] Anon. *ap.* Theobald conj.; *fountains* Qq, Ff. 119. *Seem'd*] F 2, 3, 4; *Seeme* Qq, F 1.

thinks the story of Meleager would be sufficient to suggest the use of "boar" to Shakespeare; and this seems to be confirmed by the reference in *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV. xiii. 2, to "the boar of Thessaly," which Steevens explained as "the boar killed by Meleager." The quotation from the *Venus* is indecisive, both animals being mentioned; and both are also mentioned in II. ii. 29, 30, *ante*. Dyce thinks the passages from Chaucer, Holinshed, etc., are of little or no weight, and in this I agree. On the balance of the probabilities, and especially having regard to the fact that the *Venus* preceded the *Midsummer Night's Dream* by a year or two only, and that consequently the hunting of the "boar" would naturally be fresh in Shakespeare's mind, and to the mention of Thessaly in lines 124 and 128, *post*, I have come to the conclusion that "boar" is the correct reading.

116. *hounds of Sparta*] swift and keen of scent. Cf. Vergil, *Georgics*, iii. 405:

"Veloces Spartæ catulos acremque
Molossum
Pasce sero pingui."

Halliwell quotes Golding's *Ovid* (p. 33, ed. 1567) in the description of Actæon's dogs, "This latter was a hounde of Crete, the other was of Spart."

117. *chiding*] noise, sound, cry. Cf. *As You Like It*, II. i. 7, "And churlish chiding of the winter's wind"; and *Henry VIII.* III. ii. 197, "the chiding flood."

118. *mountains*] This, I think, is much the more probable reading, having regard to Theseus's mention of "mountain's" top in line 111, *ante*, and notwithstanding Theobald's quotation from Vergil, *Æneid*, xii. 756, "ripæque lacusque Responsant circa."

120. *musical a discord*] In Shakespeare's early poetic period, at least, he was particularly fond of these verbal antitheses. Cf. v. i. 56–60; and the splendidly musical lines in *Venus and Adonis*, 431, 432 (of Adonis's "mermaid's voice"):

"Melodious discord, heavenly tune harsh-sounding,
Ear's deep-sweet music, and heart's deep-sore wounding."

121. *My hounds*] Baynes (*Edin. Rev.*, Oct. 1872) remarks: "Shakespeare might probably enough, as the commentators suggest, have derived his knowledge of Cretan and Spartan hounds from Golding's *Ovid* . . . But in enumerating the points of the slow, sure, deep-mouthed hound, it can hardly be doubted he had in view the celebrated Talbot breed nearer home." See Madden's *Diary of Master William Silence* (1897).

122. *flew'd*] "flews" are the large chaps of a deep-mouthed hound. Hanmer. See Golding's *Ovid* (1567), Bk. iii. 33:

"And shaggie Rugge with other twaine that had a Syre of Crete,
And Dam of Sparta; Tone of them callde Iollyboy, a great
And large-flewd hound."

122. *sanded*] "It means of a sandy

With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Crook-knee'd, and dew-lapp'd like Thessalian bulls;
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,
Each under each. A cry more tuneable
Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly:
Judge, when you hear. But, soft; what nymphs are these?

Ege. My lord, this is my daughter here asleep:
And this, Lysander; this Demetrius is;
This Helena, old Nedar's Helena:
I wonder of their being here together.

124. *Thessalian*] *Thessalonian* F 4. 130. *is*] omitted Q 1. 132. *Nedar's*] *Nestor's* Walker conj. 133. *of their*] Q 1; *of this* Q 2, Ff; *at their* Pope.

colour, which is one of the true developments of a bloodhound." Steevens.

123. *ears . . . dew*] Wright quotes Heywood's *Brazen Age*, II. ii.:

"the fierce Thessalian hounds
With their flagge eares, ready to sweep the dewe
From the moist earth."

124. *dew-lapp'd*] Cf. *The Tempest*, III. iii. 45, where the same expression is used of "mountaineers."

125. *match'd in mouth like bells*] Marshall compares Day's *Ile of Gulls*, II. ii.: "Dametas, were thine eares euer at a more musicall banquet? How the hounds mouthes, like bells, are tuned one vnder another"; and *The Martyr'd Souldier*, III. i., in Bullen's Old Plays, i. 203, "A packe of the bravest Spartan Dogges in the world; if they do but once open and spend there gabble, gabble, gabble, it will make the Forest ecchoe as if a Ring of bells were in it; admirably flewd, by their eares you would take 'em to be singing boyes." Baynes (*Edin. Rev.*, Oct. 1872) says: "It is clear that in Shakespeare's day the greatest attention was paid to the musical quality of the cry. It was a ruling consideration in the formation of a pack that it should possess the musical fulness and strength of a perfect canine quire. And hounds of good voice were selected and arranged in the hunting chorus on the same general principles that govern the formation of a cathedral or any other more articulate choir." And he refers to Markham's *Country Contentments*, p. 6: "If you would have your kennell for sweetnesse of cry, then you must compound it of some large dogges, that have deepe solemne mouthes, and are swift in spending, which must, as it were, beare the base in the consort, then a double number of roaring and loud ringing mouthes, which must beare the counter tenour, then some hollow, plaine, sweete mouthes, which must beare the meane or middle part; and soe with these three parts of musicke you shall make your cry perfect."

126. *A cry*] a pack of hounds giving tongue. Cf. *Othello*, II. iii. 370, "not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry."

133. *of*] Cf. III. i. 44, *ante*, "it were pity of my life"; and 138, *post*, "answer of her choice."

The. No doubt, they rose up early to observe
The rite of May; and, hearing our intent,
Came here in grace of our solemnity.
But speak, Egeus; is not this the day
That Hermia should give answer of her choice.
Ege. It is, my lord.
The. Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns.
[*Horns, and shout within. Demetrius, Lysander, Hermia, and Helena wake and start up.*
The. Good-morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past;
Begin these wood-birds but to couple now?
Lys. Pardon, my lord.
The. I pray you all, stand up.
I know you two are rival enemies;
How comes this gentle concord in the world,
That hatred is so far from jealousy,
To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity?
Lys. My lord, I shall reply amazedly,
Half 'sleep, half waking: but as yet, I swear,
I cannot truly say how I came here:
But, as I think, (for truly would I speak,

135. *rite*] Pope; *right* Qq, Ff. 140] [Horns . . .] Theobald. Shoute within: they all start vp. Winde hornes Qq, Hornes and they wake. Shout within, they all start vp Ff. 146. *is*] *is is* F 1. 149. *'sleep*] Capell; *sleep* Qq, Ff.

148. *amazedly*] In *The Tempest*, v. i. 215, is the stage-direction: *Re-enter Ariel with the Master and Boatswain amazedly following.*

149. *Half 'sleep, half waking*] Wright thinks these words are here substantives, and are loosely connected with the verb "reply." He quotes in support *Merry Wives*, III. ii. 69, "he speaks holiday"; *Twelfth Night*, I. v. 115, "he speaks nothing but madman"; *King John*, II. i. 462, "he speaks plain cannon fire." But these constructions seem analogous to that of the cognate accusative in the classics; cf. our "looking daggers"; and the loose connection of the words with the verb seems to render Wright's construction altogether too strained. Most editors regard "'sleep" and "waking" as adjectives, not substantives.

And now I do bethink me, so it is,)
I came with Hermia hither: our intent
Was to be gone from Athens, where we might,
Without the peril of the Athenian law.

Ege. Enough, enough, my lord; you have enough:
I beg the law, the law, upon his head.
They would have stolen away, they would, Demetrius,
Thereby to have defeated you and me,
You of your wife, and me of my consent,
Of my consent that she should be your wife.

Dem. My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
Of this their purpose hither to this wood;
And I in fury hither follow'd them,
Fair Helena in fancy following me.
But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,
(But by some power it is,) my love to Hermia,
Melted as is the snow, seems to me now
As the remembrance of an idle gawd,

154, 155. *might, . . . law.*] *might . . . lawe,* Q 1; *might be . . . law.* Q 2, Ff; *might Be without peril . . . law.* Hanmer; *might, . . . law,*—Dyce; *might Without . . . law . . .* Keightley. 164. *follow'd*] Rowe; *followed* Qq, Ff. 165. *following*] Q 1; *followed* Q 2, Ff. 167–169.] as in Pope; Qq, Ff end lines at *love . . . snow . . . gawd.* 168. *Melted as is*] Steevens (1785); *Melted as* Qq, Ff; *Is melted as* Pope; *Melted as doth* Capell; *All melted as* Staunton conj.; *Melted as melts* Dyce (ed. 2); *Melted as thaws* Kinnear conj.

154, 155. *where . . . law*] Dyce (ed. 2) says: "Q 2 and the Ff complete the sentence very awkwardly by adding 'be' to the reading of Q 1. Perhaps Hanmer was right in his text." I agree. "Without" seems to have a locative sense, as in I. ii. 102, and means "beyond." See *Tempest*, v. i. 271, "And deal in her command, without her power" (if the passage is to be interpreted in this sense).

168. *Melted . . . snow*] This line is irregular, a syllable having undoubtedly fallen out. I prefer the reading of the Johnson and Steevens Var. of 1785, "Melted as is," to any other; first, because it comes nearest to "as" in the trace of the letters; and next, which is somewhat remarkable, in F 1 lines 167–169 are wrongly spaced, and the "is" in "by some power it is" is printed directly over the place where the missing word ought to come in, the fair inference, I think, being that the second "is" escaped the compositor's notice.

Which in my childhood I did dote upon:
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
The object, and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia:
But, like in sickness, did I loathe this food;
Now, as in health, come to my natural taste;
Now I do wish it, love it, long for it,
And will for evermore be true to it.

The. Fair lovers, you are fortunately met:
Of this discourse we will hear more anon.
Egeus, I will overbear your will;
For in the temple, by and by with us,
These couples shall eternally be knit.
And, for the morning now is something worn,
Our purposed hunting shall be set aside.
Away, with us, to Athens! three and three,
We 'll hold a feast in great solemnity.
Come, Hippolyta. [*Exeunt The., Hip., Ege., and train.*

Dem. These things seem small and undistinguishable,

174. *betroth'd*] *betrothed* Q 1; *saw Hermia*] Steevens (1778); *see Hermia* Qq, Ff; *did see Hermia* Rowe (ed. 1); *Hermia saw* Rowe (ed. 2). 175. *But, like in*] *Belike as* Bulloch conj.; *When, like in* Kinnear conj.; *in sickness*] Steevens (1793) (Farmer conj.); *a sickness* Qq, Ff. 176. Now] Editor, *Yet* Hanmer; *But* Qq, Ff. 177. *I do*] Q 1; *do I* Q 2, Ff. 180. *we will hear more*] *we more will here* Q 1, *we will heare more* Q 2, *we shall heare more* Ff, *more will we hear* Lettsom conj. 187, 188. *We'll . . . Hippolyta*] one line Qq. 188. *Come, Hippolyta*] *Come, my Hippolyta* Hanmer. Exeunt . . .] Exeunt Duke and Lords Ff; Exit Q 2; omitted Q 1.

175. *like in sickness*] Furness agrees with Wright in thinking that there is a corruption here, and that it lies in the repetition of "But"; and he supposes that the latter "But" (*i.e.* commencing line 176) has intruded into the place of "Now"; and he also thinks that the strong contrast between his former and his present state, which Demetrius emphasises, warrants the repetition of "Now"; and that Farmer's change [namely, of "a" to "in"] serves to show us how little repugnance there was, to cultivated ears of that day, to the use of "like" as a conjunction. See Walker (*Crit.* ii. 115) for many instances of the use of "like" in the sense of "as."

Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

Her. Methinks I see these things with parted eye,
When everything seems double.

Hel. So methinks:
And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,
Mine own, and not mine own.

Dem. *Nay*, are you sure
That we are *yet* awake? It seems to me
That yet we sleep, we dream. Do not you think
The duke was here, and bid us follow him?

Her. Yea; and my father.

Hel. And Hippolyta.

Lys. And he did bid us follow to the temple.

Dem. Why then, we are awake: let 's follow him;
And by the way let us recount our dreams. [*Exeunt.*

[*Bottom awakes.*

Bot. When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer:

193. *like*] omitted Hanmer; *jewel*] *gemell* Theobald (Warburton), *double* Cartwright conj. 194, 195. Nay, *are you sure That we are* yet *awake?*] Editor; *Are you sure That we are awake?* Qq; omitted Ff; *But are . . . well awake?* Capell; *But are . . . now awake?* Steevens conj.; *Are . . . now awake?* Malone. 199. *did bid*] Q 1; *bid* Q 2, Ff. 200, 201.] prose in Qq, Ff; verse in Rowe (ed. 2). 201. *let us*] Q 2, Ff; *lets* Q 1. [Exeunt] Rowe; Exit Lovers Ff; Exit Q 2; omitted Q 1. 202. *Scene III.*] Pope. [Bottom awakes] Bottome wakes Ff, omitted Qq.

191. *parted eye*] with the eyes out of focus. "The eyes being out of unison so that the images in the two eyes do not coincide so as to form one picture." Phin. *Glossary*. Schmidt's very German explanation, "divided into pieces," is utterly inadmissible.

193. *like a jewel*] "Helena, I think, means to say that having 'found' Demetrius 'unexpectedly,' she considered her property in him as insecure as that which a person has in a jewel that he has 'found' by 'accident'; which he knows not whether he shall retain, and which therefore may properly enough be called 'his own and not his own.'" Malone. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, III. ii. 18:

"O these naughty times
Put bars between the owners and their rights!
And so, though yours, not yours";

also *Measure for Measure*, II. i. 24, "The jewel that we find we stoop and take 't."

194. Nay . . . *awake*] The reading of Capell is perhaps as good as any. The Ff omit the passage.

my next is, "Most fair Pyramus." Heigh-ho! Peter Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender! Snout, the tinker! Starveling! God's my life; stolen hence, and left me asleep! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was: man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream. Methought I was—there is no man can tell what. Methought I was,—and methought I had,—but man is but a patched fool, if he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called Bottom's dream, because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the duke: peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it after death. [*Exit.*

207. *I have had*] Qq, *I had* Ff. 209. *to*] omitted Q 1. 212. *a patched*] *a patch'd* Ff, *patcht a* Qq. 218. *ballad*] F 4; *ballet* Qq, F 1, 2, 3. 220. *a play*] *the play* Hanmer, *our play* Hudson (Walker conj.). 222. *after*] Theobald; *at her* Qq, Ff.

212. *patched fool*] "A fool in a parti-coloured coat." Johnson. Cf. "A crew of patches," III. ii. 9, *ante*, and the "motley fool" of *As You Like It*, II. vii. 13, etc.

218, 219. *Bottom's dream*] Fleay suggests that Shakespeare may here intend a glance at Robert Greene, who called one of his poems *A Maiden's Dream*, apparently because there was no maiden in it. Possibly.

220. *a play*] Walker (*Crit.* ii. 320) has collected several instances of the confusion of "a" and "our"; and his conjecture of "our" in this passage has been adopted by Dyce and Hudson.

222. *after death*] The conjecture of Theobald, which has been adopted by numerous editors. "He, as Pyramus, is killed upon the scene, and so might promise to rise again at the conclusion of the Interlude and give the Duke his dream by way of a song." Capell thinks "the singing after death does not allude to Pyramus's death, but a death in some play, 'a play' generally; opportunities of which the speaker was very certain of, from the

SCENE II.—*Athens. Quince's House.*

Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOUT, *and* STARVELING.

Quin. Have you sent to Bottom's house? is he come home yet?

Star. He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt, he is transported.

Flu. If he come not, then the play is marred; it goes not forward, doth it?

Quin. It is not possible: you have not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus, but he.

Flu. No; he hath simply the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens.

Quin. Yea, and the best person too: and he is a very paramour for a sweet voice.

Flu. You must say, paragon: a paramour is, God bless us, a thing of naught.

Scene II.] Capell; *Scene IV.* Pope. Athens Hanmer; Changes to the Town Theobald; Quince's House] A Room in Quince's House Capell. 1. Enter . . .] Rowe (ed. 2); Enter Quince, Flute, Thisby, and the rabble Qq; Enter Quince, Flute, Thisbie, Snout, and Starueling Ff. 3. Star.] Ff, Flut. Q 1, Flute Q 2. 5, 9, 13, 19. Flu.] Flute. Rowe (ed. 2); Thys. or This. or Thisb. Qq, Ff. 5, 6. *goes not*] Qq, F 1, 2; *goes* F 3, 4. 11. Quin.] Snout. Phelps (Halliwell conj.); *too*] *to* Q 1. 13. Flu.] Quin. Phelps conj. 14. *naught*] F 2, 3, 4; *nought* Qq, F 1. Enter Snug.] Rowe; Enter Snug, the Ioyner. Qq, Ff.

satisfaction he made no question of giving in discharging his present part."

Scene II.

1.] Theobald (see Nichols, *Lit. Illust.* [1817], ii. 237) thought that the Fifth Act should begin here, and pointed out that the scene should shift to Athens.

4. *transported*] changed, translated (see III. i. 116, and 121, *ante*), transformed. Schmidt defines the word in this passage by "to remove from this world to the next, to kill (euphemistically)," citing *Measure for Measure*, IV. iii. 72, where the Duke says of Barnardine, "to transport him in the mind he is were damnable." "It does not follow," as Furness remarks, "that a meaning which is appropriate in the Duke's mouth is appropriate in Starveling's"; and there need be no hesitation in saying "outright that Schmidt is downright wrong."

13, 14. *God blass us*] See note on V. i. 317, 318, *post*.

14. *a thing of naught*] "naught" and "nought" are etymologically the same,

Enter SNUG.

Snug. Masters, the duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married: if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men.

Flu. O sweet bully Bottom! Thus hath he lost sixpence a-day during his life; he could not have 'scaped sixpence a-day; an the duke had not given him sixpence a-day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hanged; he would have deserved it: sixpence a-day in Pyramus, or nothing.

Enter BOTTOM.

Bot. Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

Quin. Bottom! O most courageous day! O most happy hour!

Bot. Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask

21. *an*] Pope; *And* Qq, Ff. 25. *hearts*] *harts* Q 1. 27. [All croud about him] Capell.

and the different senses are distinguished in the spelling. That the proper spelling here must be "naught" is clear from the ejaculation of Flute. Marshall compares *Richard III.* I. i. 97:

"*Brak.* With this, my lord, myself have *nought* to do.
Glou. Naught to do with Mistress Shore! I tell thee, fellow,
He that doth *naught* with her," etc.

19. *bully*] See III. i. 8.

19, 20. *sixpence a-day*] "Shakespeare has already ridiculed the title-page of *Cambyses*, by Thomas Preston; and here he seems to allude to him, or some other person who, like him, had been pensioned for his dramatic abilities. Preston acted a part in John Ritwise's play of *Dido* before Queen Elizabeth at Cambridge, in 1564; and the Queen was so well pleased that she bestowed on him a pension of *twenty* pounds a year, which is little more than a *shilling a day*." Steevens. It is possible, though hardly probable, that Shakespeare intended some ridicule on the actor mentioned; but he lived a generation before Shakespeare wrote.

26. *courageous*] perhaps intended for "encouraging."

28. *I am to discourse*] Cf. *Two Gentlemen*, III. i. 59, "I am to break with thee of some affairs"; *Merchant of Venice*, I. i. 5, "I am to learn."

me not what; for, if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you everything, right as it fell out.

Quin. Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

Bot. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is, that the duke hath dined. Get your apparel together; good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for the short and the long is, our play is preferred. In any case, let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions, nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words; away! go, away! [*Exeunt.*

29. *no*] Ff, *not* Qq. 30. *right*] Qq, omitted Ff. 33. *All that*] *all* Rowe. 38. *preferred*] *proffered* Theobald conj. 43. *doubt but*] Qq, F 1, 2; *doubt* F 3, 4. 45. *go, away!*] *go, away.* Theobald; *go away.* Qq, Ff. [Exeunt] Ff, omitted Qq.

35. *strings*] as Malone says, "to prevent the false beards, which they were to wear, from falling off."

38. *preferred*] offered for acceptance, "proffered," in fact, and included in the "brief" of Philostrate. See v. i. 42, *post*; but not necessarily or finally accepted for representation. Theobald says: "This word is not to be understood in its most common acceptation here, as if their play was chosen in *preference* to the others (for that appears afterwards not to be the fact); but means that it was given in among others for the Duke's option. So, in *Julius Cæsar*, III. i. 27, 28, Decius says:

"Where is Metellus Cimber? Let him go,
And presently *prefer his suit* to Cæsar."

ACT V

SCENE I.—*Athens. The Palace of Theseus.*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, *Lords, and Attendants.*

Hip. 'Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.
The. More strange than true: I never may believe
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatic, the lover and the poet,
Are of imagination all compact:
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold;
That is the madman: the lover, all as frantic,

Act V. Scene I.] Rowe; Actus Quintus Ff; omitted Qq. Athens. The Palace of Theseus.] The Palace Theobald; The Same. A State-Room in Theseus's Palace Capell. Enter . . .] The stage-direction in the Ff is: "Enter Theseus, Hippolita, Egeus and his Lords," and the speeches of Philostrate are assigned to Egeus, with the sole exception of 76–81. The direction in the Qq is: "Enter Theseus, Hippolita, and Philostrate," and in line 38 they print "Philostrate" where the Ff have "Egeus." See note on line 38, *post.* 3. *antique*] Q 1; *anticke* Q 2, F 1, 2; *antick* F 3, 4. 5, 6. *apprehend More than*] Theobald; *apprehend more Then* Qq, Ff. 5–8.] Three lines in Q 1 ending *more . . . lunatick . . . compact.* 6. *cool*] *cooler* Pope.

4. *seething*] Note the antithesis to "cool" in line 6, and cf. *Winter's Tale*, III. iii. 64, "Would any but these boiled brains of nineteen and two-and-twenty hunt this weather?" *i.e.* boiling over in a state of turbulence or ferment (Craig); *Tempest*, v. i. 59, "thy brains, Now useless, boil'd within thy skull," *i.e.* brains with all the intellectual part extracted, incapable of thought (Craig); and *Macbeth*, II. i. 39, "the heat-oppressed brain."

5, 6.] Cf. *The Tempest*, v. i. 67, 68, "the ignorant fumes that mantle Their clearer reason."

8. *compact*] compacted, composed. See *Comedy of Errors*, III. ii. 22, "compact of credit"; *Venus and Adonis*, 149, "compact of fire"; *As You Like It*, II. vii. 5, "compact of jars." Marshall quotes Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, II. ii., "A man compact of craft and perjury." For the form, see also "create," 402, and "consecrate," 412 in this scene.

Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
Such tricks hath strong imagination,
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
Or, in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

12, 13.] In Q 1 ending *glance . . . And as*; in Q 2, F 1 with *glance . . . heaven.* 14–18.] as in Rowe (ed. 2); four lines in Qq, Ff, ending *things . . . shapes . . . habitation . . . imagination.* 16. *shapes*] *shape* Pope; *airy*] Q 2; *ayery* Q 1; *aire* F 1, 3; *ayre* F 2; *air* F 4. 19. *it*] *he* Rowe (ed. 2). 21. *Or*] *So* Hanmer; *For* Anon. conj. (*ap.* Cambridge editors).

11. *Helen's beauty*] familiar to Elizabethans from the gorgeous lines of Marlowe, *Faustus*, Scene xiv.:

"O thou art fairer than the evening air,
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars."

11. *brow of Egypt*] *i.e.* "brow of a gypsy." Steevens.

12. *frenzy*] Drayton's fine lines on Marlowe (*Epistle to Reynolds*) are well known:

"And that fine madness still he did retain
Which rightly should possess the poet's brain."

16. *shapes*] I think Pope's change to the singular is unnecessary. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. ii. 69, "A foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas"; and *Twelfth Night*, I. i. 14:

"So full of shapes is fancy,
That it alone is high fantastical."

21, 22.] Grant White (ed. 1) asks, "Would Shakespeare, after thus reaching the climax of his thought, fall atwaddling about bushes and bears?" and he cannot even bring himself to doubt that these lines are interpolated. The explanation of the Cowden-Clarkes is, perhaps, as satisfactory as can be given, assuming the reading "Or" is correct: "This concluding couplet, superficially considered, has an odd, bald, flat effect, as of an anti-climax, after the magnificent diction in the previous lines of the speech; but viewed dramatically they serve to give character and naturalness to the dialogue. The speaker is carried away by the impulse of his thought and nature of his subject into lofty expression, ranging somewhat apart from the matter in hand; then, feeling this, he brings back the conversation to the point of last night's visions and the lovers' related adventures by the two lines in question."

Hip. But all the story of the night told over,
And all their minds transfigured so together,
More witnesseth than fancy's images,
And grows to something of great constancy;
But, howsoever, strange and admirable.

The. Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.

Enter LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA, *and* HELENA.

Joy, gentle friends! joy, and fresh days of love,
Accompany your hearts!

Lys. More than to us
Wait on your royal walks, your board, your bed!

The. Come now; what masques, what dances shall we have,
To wear away this long age of three hours,
Between our after-supper and bed-time?

27. *But,*] *Be't* Hanmer. 28. Enter . . .] Enter Louers; Lysander . . . Qq, Ff (after 27). 29. *days of love*] F 2, 3, 4; *days Of loue* Qq, F 1. 30, 31. *More . . . bed!*] prose Qq, F 1; verse F 2, 3, 4. 31. *Wait on*] *Wait in* Rowe. 33, 34.] as in Q 2, ending *betweene . . . manager* Q 1. 34. *our*] Ff, *or* Qq.

25. *fancy's images*] Cf. the "unsettled fancy" of *The Tempest*, v. i. 59.

26. *constancy*] consistency, stability, certainty. Johnson.

27. *admirable*] in the earlier sense of "wonderful," "marvellous." Cf. "Admired Miranda!" *Tempest*, III. i. 37.

34. *after-supper*] These words are not connected with a hyphen, either in the Qq or Ff. Nor by Cotgrave, who has: "Regoubillonner. To make a *reare supper*, steale an *after supper*." Cf. *Richard III.* IV. iii. 31, "Come to me, Tyrrel, soon at after supper." "The *rere-supper*," says Staunton, "was to the supper itself what the *rere-banquet* was to the dinner — *a dessert*. On ordinary occasions the gentlemen of Shakespeare's age appear to have dined about eleven o'clock, and then to have retired either to a garden-house or other suitable apartment and enjoyed their *rere-banquet* or dessert. Supper was usually served between five and six; and this, like the dinner, was frequently followed by a collation consisting of fruits and sweatmeats, called, in the country, the *rere-supper*; in Italy, Pocenio, from the Latin *Pocænium*." Marshall says: "There is little doubt that the two words were not meant to express simply 'the time after supper,' as Schmidt explains them; but the banquet or dessert taken *after supper* in another room, and called *rere-supper* or *rear-supper*. Harrison mentions this supplementary meal in his *Description of England*, Book ii. ch. vi.: 'Heretofore there hath beene much more time spent in

Where is our usual manager of mirth? 35
What revels are in hand? Is there no play,
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?
Call Philostrate.

Phil. Here, mighty Theseus.

The. Say, what abridgement have you for this evening?
What masque? what music? How shall we beguile 40
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

Phil. There is a brief how many sports are ripe:
Make choice of which your highness will see first.
[*Giving a paper.*

The. [*Reads.*] The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung

37, 38. *To . . . Philostrate*] one line Q 1. 38. *Philostrate*] Qq, *Egeus* Ff. 38, 42, 61. Phil.] Qq, Ege. Ff. 42. *ripe*] Q 1; *rife* Q 2, Ff. 43. [Giving a paper.] Theobald. 44. The. [Reads] Theobald, The. Q 1, Thes. Q 2, Lis. Ff; *Centaurs*] *Centaur* F 4.

eating and drinking than commonlie is in these daies, for whereas of old we had breakefasts in the forenoone, beverages or nuntions after dinner, and thereto *reare suppers* generallie when it was time to go to rest (a toie brought into England by hardie *Canutus*.'" Craig quotes Christopher Langton, *Introduction to Phisycke* (1550), p. 85*b*: "Senec writeth that Asinius would not at after-supper so much as unseale a letter that he might go to bed with a quiet mynde"; and he compares "after-dinner" in *Troilus and Cressida*, II. iii. 121, "an after-dinner's breath," meaning a part of the day after dinner devoted to recreation.

38. Philostrate] Egeus here in the F, but Philostrate in line 76, *post.* The error perhaps arose from one actor doubling the parts of Egeus and Philostrate; another proof, as Furness points out, that the F was printed from a prompter's copy. [See Int. xvii. xviii.]

39. *abridgement*] amusement, pastime, diversion; that which makes the time seem short. Cf. *Hamlet*, II. ii. 439, "look, where my abridgement comes" (where, of course, the word is used in a double sense); and II. ii. 548, "the abstract and brief chronicles of the time."

42. *brief*] short account, abstract. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, v. ii. 138, "This is the brief of money, plate, and jewels."

44. The. [Reads] "What has Lysander to do in the affair?" says Theobald. "He is no courtier of Theseus's, but only an occasional guest, and just come out of the woods, so not likely to know what sports were in preparation." I have taken the old Qq for my guides. Theseus reads the titles of the sports out of the list, and then alternately makes his remarks upon them. Knight, Halliwell, Marshall, and Furness prefer the arrangement in the Ff, Marshall thinking it "much more effective as far as the stage requirements are concerned." The probability, I think, is that Shakespeare originally made Theseus both read and comment, as in the Qq, and that this arrangement

By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.
We 'll none of that: that have I told my love,
In glory of my kinsman Hercules.
[*Reads.*] The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.
That is an old device; and it was play'd
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.
[*Reads.*] The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceased in beggary.
That is some satire, keen and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.
[*Reads.*] A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus,
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.
Merry and tragical! Tedious and brief!
That is, hot ice and wondrous stained snow.

45. *hurp.*] *Harpe?* Q 1. 49. *rage.*] F 4; *rage?* Qq, F 1, 2, 3. 53. *beggary.*] *beggery?* Q 1. 57. *mirth.*] *mirth?* Qq. 58–60.] prose in Qq, Ff. 59. *ice*] *Ise* Q 1; *and wondrous stained snow*] Editor (Cartwright conj.); *and wondrous strange snow* Qq, Ff; *and wond'rous scorching snow* Hanmer; *a wondrous strange shew* Warburton; *and wonderous strange snow* Theobald (ed. 2); *and wondrous strange black snow* Capell (Upton conj.); *seething snow* Collier (ed. 2); *swarthy snow* Dyce, ed. 2 (Staunton conj.); *staining snow* Nicholson conj.; *flaming snow* Joicey; *sable snow* Keightley (Bailey conj.); *orange* (or *raven* or *azure*) *snow* Bailey conj.; *swart snow* Kinnear conj.; *and, wondrous strange! jet snow* Perring conj.

was afterwards altered to suit stage requirements, before the printing of the Folio.

44. *Centaurs*] See Ovid, *Metam.* Book xii.

52, 53. *The thrice three Muses . . . beggary*] See Introduction, p. xxvi *et seq.*

54. *critical*] censorious. Cf. *Othello*, II. i. 119, "For I am nothing, if not critical."

55. *ceremony*] apparently here pronounced as a trisyllable. See Walker, *Crit. Exam.* (1859), ii. 73.

56. *Pyramus*] See Golding's translation of the story, Appendix.

59. *hot ice and wondrous stained snow*] The conjecture of the text, in which I have been anticipated by Cartwright, seems to be the least unsatisfactory of the many suggested readings in this passage. It is clear that there must be an antithesis between "strange" and "snow" corresponding to that between "hot" and "ice." Having regard to the latter antithesis, and to III. ii. 141, "That pure congealed *white*, high Taurus' snow," it is very probable that the necessary antithesis to "snow" in Shakespeare's mind had reference to its *colour* and not to its coldness. There are two readings which do least

How shall we find the concord of this discord?

Phil. A play there is, my lord, some ten words long,
Which is as brief as I have known a play;
But by ten words, my lord, it is too long,
Which makes it tedious; for in all the play
There is not one word apt, one player fitted:
And tragical, my noble lord, it is;
For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.
Which, when I saw rehearsed, I must confess,
Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears
The passion of loud laughter never shed.

61. *there is*] *it is* Hanmer, *this is* Collier (ed. 2). 66–70.] in Qq, F 1 ending *Pyramus, . . . saw . . . water . . . laughter . . . shed.* 68. *saw*] *saw't* Hanmer.

violence to the trace of the letters in the word "strange" of the old texts, and both of which give excellent sense, namely, "stained" and "orange" (cf. "ſtrange" with "orange" and "ſtained"), "stained" being the more comprehensive and "orange" the more specific epithet. Orange, which is only a variant of red, was familiar enough to Shakespeare, as we see in the compound phrase, "orange-tawny," in this play, namely, I. ii. 94, as an epithet of beard, and III. i. 128, of the ousel's bill. Now it is well known, and was even observed by the ancients, that in the Alps, and particularly in the Polar regions, snow is sometimes coloured red by the presence of innumerable small plants, consisting of brilliant red globules resting on a gelatinous mass. The plant is an Alga, and is known as the *Protococcus nivalis*. Red snow was observed in the Arctic expedition under Captain Ross in 1818 (see his narrative, 1819), extending along the cliffs on the shore of Baffin's Bay for eight miles, the red colour extending to a depth of 12 feet. If Shakespeare, as is probable enough, had read an account of this phenomenon in any of the descriptions of the old Arctic voyagers, he would have been quick to utilise it, and hence it is no extravagant assumption to imagine that he might have written either "stained" or "orange" as an epithet of snow, signifying "colour," without exactly defining it. Up to the present, however, no reference that I am aware of has been made to any passage of this kind in the old narratives. In defence of the Qq, Ff reading, Steevens thought the meaning to be "hot ice and snow of as strange a quality"; Knight remarked, "Surely snow is a common thing, and therefore 'wondrous strange' is sufficiently antithetical—hot ice and snow as strange"; and the Cowden-Clarkes were of opinion that "strange" in the sense of "anomalous," "unnatural," "prodigious," presents a sufficient image of contrast in itself, and they refer to its use in line 27 of this scene. But these arguments seem to me weak and inconclusive. And it by no means follows that the phrase "wondrous strange" is correct in this passage because Shakespeare uses it in *3 Henry VI.* II. i. 33, and *Hamlet*, I. v. 164.

The. What are they that do play it, *Philostrate?*
Phil. Hard-handed men, that work in Athens here,
Which never labour'd in their minds till now;
And now have toil'd their unbreathed memories
With this same play, against your nuptial.
The. And we will hear it.
Phil. No, my noble lord,
It is not for you: I have heard it over,
And it is nothing, nothing in the world;
Unless you can find sport in their intents,
Extremely stretch'd, and conn'd with cruel pain,
To do you service.
The. I will hear that play;
For never anything can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it.

71. *that do play it,* Philostrate?] Editor; *that do play it?* Qq, Ff. 75. *nuptial*] Qq, F 1; *nuptialls* F 2, 3, 4. 76, 77.] as in Rowe (ed. 2); Qq, Ff ending *heare it . . . heard.* 76–80.] Daniel arranges: *No, my . . . for you, Unless . . . intents To do you service. I have heard it o'er, And it . . . world, Extremely . . . pain.* 79.] a parenthesis (Douce); a line lost after this (Johnson). 81, 82. *I . . . thing*] as in Rowe (ed. 2); one line Qq, Ff.

71. *that do play it,* Philostrate?] Clearly something has dropped out of this line. We may either supply "Philostrate?" as in the text, or read "that do play it? *Phil.* My noble lord, Hard-handed men," etc., if we fall in with Schmidt's sneer as to the "blunt answer which no Englishman would think of giving to a prince."

74. *unbreathed*] unexercised, unpractised. Steevens.

75. *nuptial*] The singular form is universal in Shakespeare, with possible exceptions in *Othello*, II. ii. 9, where the Qq have the plural; and *Pericles*, v. iii. 80 (if Shakespeare be responsible for the latter passage, and in my opinion he certainly is not).

79. *intents*] "Intents here, as the subject of the two verbs, 'stretch'd' and 'conn'd,' is used both for *endeavour* and for *the object of endeavour*, by a licence which other writers than Shakespeare have assumed." R. G. White (ed. 1).

81–83.] Marshall well remarks: "Although Shakespeare ridicules those entertainments and interludes, which were presented by the rustic amateurs before great people, yet he, at the same time, furnishes the best and most generous defence of them; and teaches us how such simple-minded, if ridiculous, efforts should be treated by all persons of good breeding." Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 516 *sqq.*, "That sport best pleases that doth least know how," etc.; and Ben Jonson, *Cynthia's Revels*, v. iii.:

> "Nothing which duty and desire to please,
> Bears written in the forehead, comes amiss."

Go, bring them in; and take your places, ladies.
[*Exit Philostrate.*

Hip. I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharged,
And duty in his service perishing.

The. Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

Hip. He says, they can do nothing in this kind.

The. The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
Our sport shall be to take what they mistake:
And what poor *simple* duty cannot do,
Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.
Where I have come, great clerks have purposed

84 [Exit. . .] Pope; omitted Qq, Ff. 91. *poor simple duty*] Editor (Cartwright conj.); *poor fearful duty* Editor conj.; *poor duty* Qq, Ff; *poor willing duty* Theobald; *poor duty meaning* Spedding conj.; *poor faltering duty* Keightley; *do*] *do aright* Seymour conj.; *do, yet would* Coleridge conj.; *aptly do* Bailey conj.; *do, but would* Abbott conj.; *cannot do*] *would, but cannot do* Halliwell. 92. *Noble respect takes*] Theobald. 91, 92. *noble respect Takes* Qq, Ff. 92. *it in might, not merit*] *not in might, but merit* Johnson conj.; *it in merit, not in might* Seymour conj.; *it in mind, not merit* Spedding conj.

91, 92. *And what . . . merit*] *i.e.* when "simpleness" and "duty" strive and are unable to perform, the noble mind [cf. *Hamlet*, III. i. 100] looks at the effort and not at the merit of the performance. The text of the Folio clearly shows that the rhythm of the lines was lost in the mind of the compositor; the result being the omission of a second adjective before "duty." And the evidence of this appears, I think, from the tenor of the whole passage. See, in especial, lines 83, "simpleness and duty"; 86, "duty"; 101, "fearful duty"; 104, "love" and "simplicity." The two adjectives which in my opinion best fulfil all the conditions requisite to satisfy rhythm and meaning are "simple" and "fearful"; the balance of probability delicately inclining to either. The whole passage 81–105 naturally divides itself into two parts, namely, 81–92 and 93–103, ending with the conclusion in lines 104, 105; and "duty" is, I think, qualified by different epithets in these two parts. In the first part it is qualified with the idea of "simpleness." Shakespeare starts with this idea in line 83, and he winds up with the same idea in line 104. Lines 93–103 (the key to which is "*fearful* duty" in line 101) suggest the idea of duty accompanied by fear, not "simpleness." Our choice therefore for a missing epithet in line 92 must lie between these two qualifying words "simple" and "fearful"; and I think the balance inclines to "simple," on the ground that Shakespeare begins and ends with that idea, namely, of "simpleness"; and consequently that Cartwright's reading is entitled to acceptance over any yet proposed.

93–103.] These lines may have been suggested to Shakespeare by some of the elaborate addresses received by Elizabeth during her royal progresses, and particularly by what happened at Warwick in 1572, where the recorder was so confused as to be unable to pro-

To greet me with premeditated welcomes;
Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,
Make periods in the midst of sentences,
Throttle their practised accent in their fears,
And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,
Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,
Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome;
And in the modesty of fearful duty
I read as much as from the rattling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity,
In least, speak most, to my capacity.

Re-enter PHILOSTRATE.

Phil. So please your grace, the prologue is addres'd.
The. Let him approach. [*Flourish of trumpets.*

Enter QUINCE *for the Prologue.*

Pro. If we offend, it is with our good-will.
That you should think, we come not to offend,

95. *Where*] *When* Hanmer. 105. Re-enter . . .] Capell; Enter . . . Pope (ed. 2); Enter Philomon Pope (ed. 1); omitted Qq, Ff. 106. Phil.] Qq, Egeus. Ff. 107. [Flourish of trumpets] Flor. Trum. Ff, omitted Qq. 108. *Scene II.*] Pope. Enter Quince for the Prologue] Rowe; Enter the Prologue Qq; Enter the Prologue Quince F 1, 2; Enter Prologue Quince F 3, 4.

ceed with the address. See Nicholls, *Progresses of Elizabeth*, i. 315. Cf. *Pericles*, v. Prol. 5, "Deep clerks she dumbs."

98. *have*] understand "they."

106. *addres'd*] ready, prepared, as in several passages in Shakespeare.

107. Flourish of trumpets] It appears from Dekker's *Guls Hornbook*, 1609 (ed. Grosart, ch. vi. p. 350), that the prologue was anciently ushered in by trumpets. "Present not your selfe on the Stage (especially at a new play) vntill the quaking prologue hath (by rubbing) got culor into his cheekes, and is ready to give the trumpets their Cue, that hees vpon point to enter." It will be remembered that young gallants sat on three-footed stools on the stage itself.

107. Enter Quince for the Prologue] "The person who spoke the prologue, who entered immediately after the third sounding, usually wore a long black velvet cloak, which, I suppose, was best suited to a supplicatory address.

But with good-will. To show our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider, then, we come but in despite.
We do not come, as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand; and, by their show,
You shall know all, that you are like to know.

The. This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Lys. He hath rid his prologue like a rough colt; he knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord: it is not enough to speak, but to speak true.

Hip. Indeed he hath played on his prologue, like a child on a recorder; a sound, but not in government.

114. *is. All*] *is all* Pope. 115. *here. That*] *here that* Pope. 118. *points*] *his points* Collier (ed. 2). 120. *A good*] Dem. *A good* Cambridge editors conj. 122. *his*] Ff, *this* Qq. 123. *a recorder*] Qq, F 1; *the recorder* F 2, 3, 4.

Of this custom, whatever may have been its origin, some traces remained until very lately; a black coat having been, if I mistake not, within these few years, the constant stage-habiliment of our modern prologue-speakers. The complete dress of the ancient prologue-speaker is still retained in the play exhibited in *Hamlet*, before the King and Court of Denmark." Malone, *Hist. Eng. Stage*, Var., 1821, vol. iii. p. 115.

108–117.] There is a similar instance of the ingenious perversion of sense by mispunctuation in Nicholas Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister*, 1566, III. ii., where Ralph's letter to Dame Custance, as read by Matthew Merrygreek, begins:

"Sweete mistresse, where as I love you nothing at all,
Regarding your substance and richesse chiefe of all," etc.

118. *stand upon*] Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, III. i. 100, "'tis but the time, And drawing days out, that men stand upon."

120. *the stop*] a term in horsemanship, indicating that the horse was thrown upon its haunches. See Madden, *Diary of Master William Silence* (1897), p. 298; and cf. *Cymbeline*, v. iii. 40, "Then began a stop i' the chaser, a retire." Cf. also *A Lover's Complaint*, 109, "What rounds, what bounds, what course, what stop he makes!"

123. *recorder*] a kind of flute or flageolet. Cf. *Hamlet*, III. ii. 360. Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, 246, says: "Old English musical instruments were made of three or four different sizes, so that a player might take any of the four parts that were required to fill up the harmony . . . Shakespeare speaks in *Hamlet* of the

The. His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

Enter PYRAMUS *and* THISBE, WALL, MOONSHINE, *and* LION.

Pro. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
This beauteous lady Thisby is, certain.
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
Wall, that vile wall which did these lovers sunder:
And through wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
To whisper: at the which let no man wonder.
This man, with lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth moonshine; for, if you will know,
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn
To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.

126. *next*] Qq, F 1; *the next* F 2, 3, 4. Tawyer with a trumpet before them Ff. Enter . . .] Enter . . . as in dumb Show Capell. 131. *lime*] *loam* Hudson (Capell conj. MS.). 132. *that*] Qq, F 1; *the* F 2, 3, 4. 135. *lanthorn*] *lanterne* Q 1.

recorder as a little pipe, and (in the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* says) like a *child* on a recorder, but in an engraving of the instrument it reaches from the lip to the knee of the performer. Salter describes the 'recorder,' from which the instrument derives its name, as situate in the upper part of it, *i.e.* between the hole below the mouth and the highest hole for the finger."

123, 124. *government*] control. Cf. *Hamlet*, III. ii. 372, "*Govern* these ventages with your fingers and thumb."

126.] "Tawyer" in the stage-direction of the Folios is "generally understood to be the name of the trumpeter; but Collier on the strength of a note in the corrected Folio 'Enter Presenter,' interpreted 'Tawyer' as the name of the actor who filled the part of Presenter and introduced the characters of the play." Cambridge editors' note.

130. *certain*] "A most convenient word for filling up a line, and at the same time conveying no meaning." Wright. Steevens thinks, perhaps rightly, that a burlesque was here intended in its frequent recurrence as a bungling rhyme in poetry more ancient than the age of Shakespeare; and he gives several quotations from Wynkyn de Worde (Var. ed. vol. v. 318).

135. *lanthorn, dog, and bush*] Cf. Caliban in *The Tempest*, II. ii. 151, "my mistress show'd me thee, and thy dog, and thy bush."

This grisly beast, which Lion hight by name,
The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,
. . . . .
Did scare away, or rather did affright:
And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall;
Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.
Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth, and tall,
And finds his trusty Thisby's mantle slain:
Whereat with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;
And Thisby, tarrying in mulberry shade,
His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,

139. *grisly*] *grizy* F 1; *Lion hight by name*] *by name Lion hight* Theobald. 141. *scare*] F 3, 4; *scarre* Qq, F 1, 2. 142. *did fall*] *let fall* Pope. 145. *trusty*] Qq; omitted F 1; *gentle* F 2, 3, 4. 148. *And Thisby, tarrying*] Qq, Ff; *And, Thisby tarrying* Malone; *in*] *in the* F 3, 4.

139–141.] "As all the other parts of this speech are in *alternate* rhyme, excepting that it closes with a *couplet*; and as no rhyme is left to 'name,' we must conclude either a verse is slipt out, which cannot now be retrieved; or by a transposition of the words, as I have placed them, the poet intended a *triplet*." Theobald. Malone conjectures that a line has been lost after "night." The Cowden-Clarkes (*Shakespeare Key*, p. 674) believe that the defective rhyming was intentional, to denote the slipshod style of the doggerel that forms the dialogue in the interlude, which they had always cherished a conviction Shakespeare intended to be taken as written by Peter Quince himself; and Furness "wholly agrees" with their view. I wholly disagree, and wholly agree with Theobald and Malone that a verse has "slipt out"; but the loss can merely be indicated in the text, without "any attempt to improve the language of the rude mechanicals."

146, 147.] Wright aptly remarks of the alliteration that "it was an exaggeration of the principle upon which Anglo-Saxon verse was constructed." Cf "The raging rocks," etc., *ante*, I. ii. 33, 271 *post*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. ii. 57 (where Holofernes calls it "affecting the letter"), "The preyful princess pierced and prick'd a pretty pleasing pricket," etc. Rushton, *Shakespeare Illustrated*, 2nd part, 1868, p. 15, referring to the above passages, quotes Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, lib. iii. cap. 22, "Ye have another manner of composing your metre nothing commendable, specially if it be too much used, and is when one maker takes too much delight to fill his verse with wordes beginning all with a *letter*, as an English rimer that said:

'The deadly droppes of darke disdaine,
Do daily drench my due desartes.'

. . . And such like, for such composition makes the meetre runne away smoother, and passeth from the lippes with more *facilitie* by *iteration* of a letter than by alteration, which alteration of a letter requires an exchange of ministry and office in the lippes, teeth on palate, and so doth not the *iteration*."

Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain,
At large discourse, while here they do remain.

[*Exeunt Prologue, Pyramus, Thisbe, Lion, and*

The. I wonder if the lion be to speak. [*Moonshine.*

Dem. No wonder, my lord: one lion may, when many asses do.

Wall. In this same interlude it doth befall,
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;
And such a wall, as I would have you think,
That had in it a crannied hole, or chink,
Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisby,
Did whisper often very secretly.
This loam, this rough-cast, and this stone doth show,
That I am that same wall; the truth is so:
And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

The. Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

Dem. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord.

The. Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

Re-enter PYRAMUS.

Pyr. O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!
O night, which ever art, when day is not!

151. [Exeunt . . .] Exit Lyon, Thysby, and Mooneshine Qq (after 154); Exit all but Wall Ff (repeating direction of Qq). 156. *Snout*] Ff, *Flute* Qq. 158. *crannied*] *cranny* Collier conj. 159. *Pyramus*] *Pyr'mus* Theobald; *Thisby*] *This-be* Theobald. 161. *loam*] F 3, 4; *lome* Qq; *loame* F 1, 2; *lime* Reed (Capell conj.). 167. *discourse*] *in discourse* Farmer conj. 168, 186. Re-enter . . .] Wright; Enter . . . Qq, Ff.

158. *crannied*] See 163, *post.*

163. *cranny*] See Golding's *Ovid, Metam.* Book iv., "The wall that parted house from house had riuen therein a 'crany.'"

163. *sinister*] an assonance with "whisper" in the next line. It is accented on the penultimate, as in *Henry V.* II. iv. 85, *Troilus*, IV. v. 128, and, I think, in every other passage, prose and verse, where it occurs.

169. *grim-look'd*] grim-looking, per-

O night, O night! alack, alack, alack,
I fear my Thisby's promise is forgot!
And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!
Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne.
[*Wall holds up his fingers.*
Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
But what see I? No Thisby do I see.
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss!
Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

The. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

Pyr. No, in truth, sir, he should not. "Deceiving me," is Thisby's cue: she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see it will fall pat as I told you. Yonder she comes.

Re-enter THISBE.

This. O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,
For parting my fair Pyramus and me!
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones;
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

173. *O sweet, O*] Qq, *thou sweet and* Ff, *O sweet and* Pope. 176. Wall . . . fingers] Capell. 183–186.] four lines in Qq, Ff. 184. *now*] omitted Ff. 186. *it will fall pat . . . comes.* Re-enter Thisbe] *it will fall . . . comes.* Enter T. Qq; *it will fall.* Enter Thisbie. *Pat . . . comes* Ff. 190. *hair*] *hayire* Q 1; *up in thee*] Ff, *now againe* Qq.

haps; an example of an indefinite and apparently not passive use of a passive participle. See Abbott, § 374.

190. *knit up*] In *The Tempest*, III. iii. 89, of Prospero's enemies, "all knit up in their distractions."

Pyr. I see a voice: now will I to the chink,
To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face.
Thisby!

This. My love thou art, my love I think.

Pyr. Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace,
And like Limander am I trusty still.

This. And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.

Pyr. Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true.

This. As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you.

Pyr. O, kiss me through the hole of this vile wall.

This. I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.

Pyr. Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?

This. 'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay.

[*Exeunt Pyramus and Thisbe.*

Wall. Thus have I, wall, my part discharged so;
And, being done, thus wall away doth go. [*Exit.*

The. Now is the mure all down between the two neighbours.

191. *see*] Qq, F 1; *heare* F 2, 3, 4. 192, 193. *To spy . . . Thisby!*] one line Qq, Ff. 192. *an*] Pope; *and* Qq, Ff; *hear*] Qq, F 1; *see* F 2, 3, 4. 194. *love thou art, my love*] Qq, Ff; *love! thou art, my love*, Theobald. 197. *I*] Qq, F 2; omitted F 1, 3, 4. 200. *vile*] *vilde* Q 1. 203. [Exeunt P. and T.] Dyce. 205. [Exit] Exit Clow. Ff; omitted Qq; Exeunt Wall, P. and T. Capell. 206. *mure all*] Hanmer (Theobald conj.), *Moon vsed* Qq, *morall* Ff, *mural* Pope (ed. 2), *wall* Collier conj.

196–199. *Limander, etc.*] "Limander and Helen are spoken by the blundering player for Leander and Hero; Shafalus and Procrus, for Cephalus and Procris." Johnson. "*Procris and Cephalus*, by Henry Chute, was entered on the Stationers' Registers by John Wolff in 1593, and probably published in the same year. It was a poem, but not dramatic, as has been suggested." Malone. It had almost certainly been read by Shakespeare.

206. *mure all*] See Text. notes. Theobald (*Shakespeare Rest.* p. 142) says: "I am apt to think the poet wrote 'Now is the *mure all* down,' and then Demetrius's reply is apposite enough." "Mure," meaning wall, occurs in *2 Henry IV.* IV. iv. 119, but "mural" is not found in Shakespeare. R. G. White (ed. 1) says: "'Mural' for 'wall' is an anomally in English, and is too infelicitous to be regarded as one of Shakespeare's daring feats of language . . . Shakespeare evidently thought that it would be plainer if the wall were represented both as the re-

Dem. No remedy, my lord, when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.

Hip. This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

The. The best in this kind are but shadows: and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.

Hip. It must be your imagination, then, and not theirs.

The. If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

Re-enter LION *and* MOONSHINE.

Lion. You ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.

209. *hear*] *rear* Hanmer (Warburton), *sheer* Hanmer conj. MS. 210, 213. Hip.] Dutch. or Dut. Qq, Ff. 210. *ever*] Q 1; *ere* Q 2, Ff. 217. *come*] Qq; *com* F 1; *comes* F 2, 3, 4; *beasts in, a man*] Rowe (ed. 2); *beasts, in a man* Qq, Ff; *beasts in a moon* Theobald; *beasts in, a moon* Hanmer. 217. Re-enter . . .] Wright; Enter . . . Qq, Ff.

straint upon the passions of the lovers and as a pander to them, and so he changed 'moon used' to 'moral down.' He did this, I believe, with the more surety of attaining his point, because 'moral' was then pronounced 'mo-ral,' and 'mural,' as I am inclined to think, 'moo-ral.'" I am inclined to think with Furness that "in the old pronunciation lay a pun, now lost, and for a pun, as Johnson said, Shakespeare would lose the world, and be content to lose it." Marshall suggests that there may have been a proverbial expression "the wall is down between the neighbours," meaning "the cause of difference between them is at an end."

209. *to hear*] "Demetrius's reply alludes to the proverb 'walls have ears.' A 'wall' between almost any 'two neighbours' would soon be 'down,' were it to exercise this faculty without previous 'warning.'" Farmer. Probably.

217. *a man*] Theseus only means to say that the "man" who represented the moon, and came in at the same time, with a lanthorn in his hand and a bush of thorns at his back, was as much a beast as he who performed the part of the lion. Malone. Wright preferred (1877) the punctuation of the Qq, Ff. He then considered that "in" here signifies "in the character of," as in IV. ii. 24, "sixpence a-day in Pyramus, or nothing." In the Cambridge edition (1891) he adopts the punctuation of Rowe.

Then know that I, one Snug the joiner, am
No lion fell, nor else no lion's dam:
For if I should as lion come in strife
Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.

The. A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.

Dem. The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.

Lys. This lion is a very fox for his valour.

The. True; and a goose for his discretion.

Dem. Not so, my lord: for his valour cannot carry his discretion; and the fox carries the goose.

The. His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour; for the goose carries not the fox. It is well: leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

Moon. This lanthorn doth the horned moon present.

Dem. He should have worn the horns on his head.

222, 223. *I . . . dam*] *I am Snug the joiner in A lion-fell, or else a lion's skin* Daniel conj. 222. *one*] Ff, *as* Qq. 223. *No lion fell*] Rowe, Capell; *A Lyon fell* Qq, Ff; *A lion-fell* Singer (ed. 2); *A lion's fell* Dyce (ed. 1) (Field conj.); *else*] *eke* Capell. 225. *on*] Qq, *of* Ff. 235. *listen*] Q 1; *hearken* Q 2, Ff. 238. *on*] *upon* Hanmer.

223. *No lion fell*] Rowe's reading is, after all, to be preferred. As Marshall well remarks, the "no" before "lion's dam" seems to point to "No" and not "A" as the right reading; and Snug has already used "rough" for an epithet of lion in line 221, and of this "fell" seems merely a variant. See also the "lion vile" of Pyramus, 289, *post*. For the negative construction we may compare *Julius Cæsar*, III. i. 90, "There is no harm intended to your person, Nor to no Roman else." No doubt Shakespeare intended a quibble between fell "skin" and fell "fierce." Craig, adhering to the reading of the Qq, Ff, prefers to take "fell" in the sense of "skin," or "skin with the wool on"; and reminds us that England sent wool-fells to Flanders in Edward III.'s reign.

237. *lanthorn*] Steevens needlessly modernised this word into "lantern," and has been followed by many of the best editors, thereby obliterating the jingle, if there be one, in "This lan*thorne* doth the *horned* moone present." The Cambridge edition, both first and second, nicely discriminates between the pronunciation of Snug and of Theseus by giving "lanthorn" to the former and "lantern" to the latter. Furness. There is no harm in this.

The. He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible within the circumference.

Moon. This lanthorn doth the horned moon present; Myself the man i' the moon do seem to be.

The. This is the greatest error of all the rest: the man should be put into the lantern. How is it else the man i' the moon?

Dem. He dares not come there for the candle; for, you see, it is already in snuff.

Hip. I am aweary of this moon: would he would change!

The. It appears, by his small light of discretion, that he is in the wane; but yet, in courtesy, in all reason, we must stay the time.

Lys. Proceed, Moon.

Moon. All that I have to say is, to tell you, that the lanthorn is the moon; I, the man i' the moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

Dem. Why, all these should be in the lantern; for all these are in the moon. But, silence! here comes Thisbe.

242. *do*] Q 2, *doe* Q 1, *doth* Ff. 244, 257. *lantern*] *lanthorne* Qq, Ft. 248. *aweary*] Q 1; *weary* Q 2, Ff. 250. *his*] *this* Pope. 255. *i' the*] *ith* Q 1; *in the* Q 2, Ff. 257, 258. *for all these*] Q 1; *for they* Q 2, Ff.

243. *of all*] See Abbott, § 409, for illustrations of this idiom. He calls it "the confusion of two constructions in superlatives." Cf. also in this play, IV. ii. 9, "the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens"; and III. ii. 337, "to try whose right, *Of thine or mine*, is *most* in Helena."

247. *in snuff*] The primary meaning is of course the deposit which gathers on the wick of a candle, and which has to be removed for better light. From the darkening of a light by this deposit, the word snuff came to mean offence, anger, as here, and *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 22, "You 'll mar the light by taking it in snuff," and other passages in Shakespeare, *e.g. 1 Henry IV.* I. iii. 41, and *Lear*, III. i. 26.

250. *small light of discretion*] Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 734, "I have seen the day of wrong through the little hole of discretion."

Re-enter THISBE.

This. This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?
Lion. Oh—.

[*The Lion roars. Thisbe runs off.*

Dem. Well roared, lion.
The. Well run, Thisbe.
Hip. Well shone, Moon. Truly, the moon shines with a good grace.

[*The Lion shakes Thisbe's mantle, and exit.*

The. Well moused, lion.
Lys. And so the lion vanished.
Dem. And then came Pyramus.

Re-enter PYRAMUS.

Pyr. Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;
I thank thee, moon, for shining now so bright;
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to take of truest Thisby sight.

260, 268. Re-enter . . .] Wright; Enter . . . Qq, Ff. 260. *old . . . tomb*] *ould . . . tumbe* Q 1; *Where is*] *Wher's* Q 2. 261. The Lion roares, Thisby runs off] Ff, omitted Qq. 265. *a*] omitted Rowe (ed. 1); [The Lion . . . exit] Capell; omitted Qq, Ff. 266. *moused*] *mouz'd* Qq, Ff; *mouth'd* Rowe. 267, 268.] as transposed by Hudson (Spedding conj.); Dem. *And then . . . vanished* Qq, Ff. 271. *gleams*] Staunton (Knight conj.); *beames* Qq, F 1; *streams* F 2, 3, 4. 272. *take*] Qq, *taste* Ff; *Thisby*] Qq, *Thisbies* Ff.

267, 268.] The suggestion of Spedding as to the arrangement of these lines is probably warranted by the sense.

271. *gleams*] the alliteration obviously requires this instead of the reading of the Qq, F 1, or the Ff, even though it does not seem to occur elsewhere in the plays. The verb occurs in *Lucrece*, 1378, "And dying eyes gleam'd forth their ashy lights." Furness thinks "beams" should be "retained in the speech of one whose eye had not heard, nor his ear seen, nor his hand tasted a dream which he had in the wood where he had gone to rehearse obscenely"—reasoning which appears to be entirely inconclusive.

But stay, O spite!
But mark, poor knight,
What dreadful dole is here!
Eyes, do you see?
How can it be?
O dainty duck! O dear!
Thy mantle good,
What, stain'd with blood!
Approach, ye Furies fell!
O Fates! come, come;
Cut thread and thrum;
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!

The. This passion, and the death of a dear friend, would go near to make a man look sad.

Hip. Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

Pyr. O, wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?
Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear:
Which is—no, no—which was the fairest dame
That lived, that loved, that liked, that look'd with cheer.

273–284.] as in Pope; eight lines Qq, Ff. 278. *dear*] *deare* Qq; *Deere* F 1, 2; *Deer* F 3, 4. 281. *ye*] Qq, *you* Ff. 285, 286] verse in Ff, ending *friend . . . sad.* 289. *vile*] Pope; *vilde* Qq, F 1; *vild* F 2, 3, 4; *wild* Rowe; *dear*] *deare* Qq; *deere* F 1, 2; *Deer* F 3, 4.

281. *Approach, ye Furies*] Malone says: "In these lines and in those spoken by Thisbe, 'O sisters three,' etc., lines 334 *sqq.*, the poet probably intended, as Dr. Farmer observed to me, to ridicule a passage in *Damon and Pythias*, by Richard Edwards, 1582 (p. 44, ed. Hazlett's *Dodsley*):

'Ye *furies*, all at once
On me your torments trie:
Gripe me, you greedy griefs,
And present pangues of death,
You sisters three, with cruel handes
With speed come stop my breath!'"

283. *thrum*] "The tufted part beyond the tie, at the end of the warp, in weaving; or any collection or tuft of short thread." Nares. Cf. "thrummed hat" in *The Merry Wives*, IV. ii. 80, a hat made of weaver's thrums, or at least of very coarse woollen cloth.

284. *quell*] kill, murder, usually a verb in Shakespeare, but a noun in *Macbeth*, I. vii. 72, "of our great quell."

285, 286. *This passion . . . sad*] "The humour of the present speech consists in coupling the ridiculous fustian of the clown's assumed passion with an event

Come, tears, confound;
Out, sword, and wound
The pap of Pyramus;
Ay, that left pap,
Where heart doth hop: [*Stabs himself.*
Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.
Now am I dead,
Now am I fled;
My soul is in the sky:
Sun, lose thy light!
Moon, take thy flight! [*Exit Moonshine*
Now die, die, die, die, die." [*Dies.*

Dem. No die, but an ace, for him; for he is but one.

Lys. Less than an ace, man; for he is dead; he is nothing.

The. With the help of a surgeon, he might yet recover, and prove an ass.

292–303.] as in Pope ; seven lines in Qq, Ff. 296. [Stabs himself] Dyce; omitted Qq, Ff. 301. *Sun*] *Sunne* Anon. *ap.* Rann; *Tongue* Qq, Ff; *lose*] Q 2, Ff; *loose* Q 1. 302. [Exit M.] Capell; omitted Qq, Ff. 303. [Dies] Capell; omitted Qq, Ff. 309. *and prove*] Q 2, Ff; *and yet prooue* Q 1.

which would, in itself, make a man look sad" [*i.e.* serious]. R. G. White.

294. *pap*] "It ought to be remembered that the broad pronunciation, now almost peculiar to the Scotch, was anciently current in England. 'Pap' therefore was sounded 'pop.'" Steevens.

301. *Sun*] Capell says Bottom's "tongue," instead of "sunne" or "sun," is a very choice blunder; and Halliwell aptly remarks: "The present error of 'tongue' for 'sun' appears too absurd to be humorous, and it may well be questioned whether it be not a misprint." The collocation of the word, namely, between "sky" and "moon," is certainly in favour of Halliwell's view. It is somewhat remarkable that "tongue" occurs in its proper place in line 340, *post*, "Tongue, not a word."

304. *ace*] See the *New Eng. Dict.*, *s.v.*: "As the ace at dice was the lowest or worst number, 'ace' was frequently used for bad luck, misfortune, loss." The only other reference in Shakespeare is in *Cymbeline*, II. iii. 3, "the most coldest [man] that ever turned up ace."

Hip. How chance Moonshine is gone before Thisbe comes back and finds her lover?

The. She will find him by starlight. Here she comes; and her passion ends the play.

Re-enter THISBE.

Hip. Methinks she should not use a long one for such a Pyramus: I hope she will be brief.

Dem. A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better; he for a man, God warrant us; she for a woman, God bless us.

Lys. She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

Dem. And thus she means, videlicet:—

This. Asleep, my love?
What, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus, arise!

310. *Moonshine*] *the Moon-shine* F 3, 4. 310, 311. *before Thisbe . . . lover?*] Rowe; *before? Thisby . . . Louer.* Qq, Ff. 313. Re-enter . . .] Dyce; Enter Thisby Ff (after 311); omitted Qq. 316. *mote*] Steevens, 1793 (Heath conj.); *moth* Qq, Ff. 317, 318. *he for a man . . . God bless us*] Qq, omitted Ff. 318. *warrant*] Collier, *warnd* Qq, *warn'd* Staunton, *ward* Staunton conj. 321. *means*] Qq, Ff; *moans* Theobald. 322–345.] as in Pope; sixteen lines in Qq, Ff.

310. *chance*] Cf. I. i. 129.

316. *mote*] See III. i. 164.

317, 318. *he for a man . . . God bless us*] This passage is omitted in the Ff, as Collier thinks, on account of the Statute 3 Jac. I. cap. 21, which of course had not passed when the Qq were printed. This statute imposed a penalty of ten pounds on any player who should "jestingly or profanely speak or use the holy name of God."

321. *means*] Jamieson, *Scot. Dict.*: "To Mene, Meane, To utter complaints, to make lamentations." Theobald read "moans," and the change appears to be supported by 187, *ante*, and 332, *post*. But Ritson pointed out that "means" had anciently the same signification as "moans," and that it is a common term in Scottish law, signifying to "tell," "relate," "declare"; and that the petitions to the Lords of Session in Scotland run: "To the lords of council and session humbly means and shows your petitioner." Cf. *Two Gentlemen*, V. iv. 136, "To make such means for her as thou hast done." Craig refers to Marston, *The Fawn*, IV. i., "If you make good means and entreat hard, you may obtain a passage."

Speak, speak. Quite dumb?
Dead, dead? A tomb
Must cover thy sweet eyes.
These lily *mows*,
This cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks,
Are gone, are gone:
Lovers, make moan!
His eyes were green as leeks.
O Sisters Three,
Come, come, to me,
With hands as pale as milk;
Lay them in gore,
Since you have shore
With shears his thread of silk.

326. *tomb*] *tumbe* Q 1. 327. *thy*] *my* F 3, 4. 328. mows] Editor; *brows* Theobald; *lips* Qq, Ff. 337. *Lay*] *Lave* Theobald. 339. *his*] *this* F 3, 4.

325, 326, 331. *Speak, speak . . . Dead, dead . . . Are gone, are gone*] "In these passages Shakespeare probably uses the underlay or Coocko-spel, thus described by Puttenham: 'Ye have another sort of repetition when in one verse, or clause of a verse, ye iterate one word without any intermission, as thus: . . . bemoaning the departure of a dear friend:

'The chiefest staffe of mine assured stay,
With no small grief, *is gon, is gon* away.'"

Rushton, *Shakespeare Illustrated*, Part ii. (1868), pp. 19, 20.

328, 329. *lily* mows . . . *cherry nose*] "mows," used of course in burlesque fashion for "lips," is, admittedly, a somewhat daring emendation. But (1) I think it reaches the burlesque level of the passage; and (2) regular rhyme and metre are clearly essential. Theobald says: "All Thisby's lamentation till now runs in regular rhyme and metre. I suspect, therefore, the poet wrote These lilly *brows*. Now *black* brows being a beauty, *lilly* brows are as ridiculous as a *cherry* nose, *green* eyes, or *cowslip* cheeks." I think Theobald's reasoning is sound, and that we must adopt a rhyming word, notwithstanding the protest of Furness, that "of all tasks, that of converting the intentional nonsense of this interlude into sense seems to me the most needless." The explanation of the change to "lips" may well be that, although the printers of the Qq, Ff understood the general sense of the passage, they failed to grasp the burlesque usage of "mows" (=mouths), and so substituted for it the word which they understood.

333. *green*] Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III. i. 221, "So green, so quick, so fair an eye."

334. *O Sisters Three*] See 281, *ante*.

Tongue, not a word:
Come, trusty sword;
Come, blade, my breast imbrue:
[*Stabs herself.*
And farewell, friends;
Thus Thisby ends:
Adieu, adieu, adieu." [*Dies.*

The. Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

Dem. Ay, and Wall too.

Bot. [*Starting up.*] No, I assure you, the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance between two of our company?

The. No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse; for when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it had played Pyramus, and hanged himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably discharged. But come, your Bergomask: let your epilogue alone. [*A dance.*

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:

342. [Stabs herself] Dyce; omitted Qq, Ff. 345. [Dies] Dyce. 348. Bot.] Ff, Lyon. Qq; [Starting up] Capell. 354. *need*] *be* Capell conj.; *Marry*] *Mary* Q 1. 355. *hanged*] Qq, *hung* Ff. 358. *Bergomask*] Rowe; *Burgomaske* Qq, F 1, 2; *Burgomask* F 3, 4. 359. [A dance] A dance and exeunt clowns Capell; Here a dance of clowns Rowe; omitted Qq, Ff.

358. *Bergomask*] "A dance after the manner of the peasants of Bergomasco (*sic*), a country in Italy belonging to the Venetians. All the buffoons in Italy affect to imitate the ridiculous jargon of that people; and from thence it became a custom to mimic also their manner of dancing." Hanmer. Wright says: "If we substitute Bergamo for Bergomasco, Hanmer's explanation is correct."

360. *iron tongue of midnight*] Craig compares *King John*, III. iii. 37:

"the midnight bell
Did, with his iron tongue and brazen mouth,
Sound on into the drowsy race of night."

Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy time.
I fear we shall outsleep the coming morn,
As much as we this night have overwatch'd.
This palpable-gross play hath well beguiled
The heavy gait of night. Sweet friends, to bed.
A fortnight hold we this solemnity,
In nightly revels, and new jollity. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PUCK.

Puck. Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf behowls the moon;
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
All with weary task fordone.
Now the wasted brands do glow,
Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,
Puts the wretch, that lies in woe,
In remembrance of a shroud.

364. *palpable-gross*] hyphened by Capell. 365. *gait*] *gaite* Rowe (ed. 2); *gate* Qq, Ff. 368. *Scene II.*] Capell; *Scene III.* Pope; Enter Puck] Enter Puck, with a broom on his shoulder Collier (ed. 2); *lion*] Rowe; *Lyons* Qq, Ff. 369. *behowls*] Theobald (Warburton); *beholds* Qq, Ff. 371. *fordone*] *foredoone* Q 1; *fore-done* Q 2, Ff. 373. *screech-owl*] *scriech-owle* Q 1; *scritch-owle* Q 2, Ff; *screeching*] *scrieching* Q 1; *scritching* Q 2, Ff; *schrieking* Johnson.

365. *gait*] Cf. II. i. 130, *ante*, "with swimming gait"; 413, *post*; and *Richard II.* III. ii. 15, "And heavy-gaited toads lie in their way."

368. *Now, etc.*] Coleridge's well-known criticism of this lyric passage is abundantly justified: "Very Anacreon in perfectness, proportion, grace, and spontaneity! So far it is Greek; but then add, O! what wealth, what wild ranging, and yet what compression and condensation of English fancy! In truth, there is nothing in Anacreon more perfect than these thirty lines, or half so rich and imaginative. They form a speckless diamond."

369. *behowls*] Warburton's certain correction, for the "beholds" of the Qq, Ff, is founded on "the wolf's characteristic property." Theobald compares Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* (Part ii.), III. iii., "Now barkes the wolfe against the full cheekt moon," etc., where the whole passage seems copied from Shakespeare. Malone compares Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, I. v. 37, "And hungry wolves continually did howle."

371. *fordone*] overcome. Cf. *Hamlet*, II. i. 103, "Love; Whose violent property fordoes itself."

Now it is the time of night,
That the graves, all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide:
And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team,
From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolic: not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:
I am sent with broom before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.

Enter OBERON *and* TITANIA, *with their train.*

Obe. Though the house give glimmering light,
By the dead and drowsy fire,

385. *hallow'd*] Theobald; *hallowed* Qq, Ff. 387. Enter . . .] Enter King and Queene of Fairies, with all their traine Q 1; Enter . . . with their traine Q 2, Ff. 388. *Though*] Grant White; *Through* Qq, Ff; *the house give*] *this house in* Johnson conj., *this hall go* Lettsom conj., *the house gives* Kinnear conj. 389. *By*] *Now* Kinnear conj.

376. *Now it is, etc.*] Cf. *Hamlet*, III. ii. 406, "'Tis now the very witching time of night."

381. *triple Hecate's team*] "The chariot of the moon was drawn by two horses, the one black, the other white. Hecate is uniformly a disyllable in Shakespeare, except in *1 Henry VI.* III. ii. 64. In Spenser and Ben Jonson it is rightly a trisyllable. But Marlowe, though a scholar, and Middleton use it as a disyllable, and Golding has it both ways." Douce.

386. *broom*] "Robin Goodfellow, and the fairies generally, were remarkable for their cleanliness. Reginald Scot says thus of Puck: 'Your grandames, maid, were wont to set a boll of milk for him, for (his pains in) grinding of malt or mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight.' Compare also Ben Jonson's masque of *Love Restored*: 'Robin Goodfellow, he that sweeps the hearth and the house clean, riddles for the country-maids, and does all their other drudgery.'" Halliwell.

387. *behind the door*] Of course this means to sweep away the dust which lies behind the door; not, as Farmer thought, to sweep it behind, "a common practice in large houses, where the doors of halls and galleries are thrown backward, and seldom or never shut."

388. *Though*] I think this, the reading of Grant White, must be accepted. He says: "Plainly, Oberon does not intend to command his sprites to give glimmering light through the house *by the dead and drowsy fire*, but to direct every elf and fairy sprite to

Every elf and fairy sprite,
Hop as light as bird from brier;
And this ditty, after me,
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

Tita. First, rehearse your song by rote;
To each word a warbling note:
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,
Will we sing, and bless this place.

[*Song and dance.*

Obe. Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be;

394. *your*] Q 1; *this* Q 2, Ff. 397. [Song and Dance] Capell. 398–420.] assigned to *Oberon* in Qq; called *The Song* in Ff and printed in italics; restored to *Oberon* by Johnson.

hop as light as bird from brier, *though* the house give glimmering light by the dead and drowsy fire." The merit of White's reading is that it restores sense and meaning to the passage with the smallest possible change; and he has also rightly restored the punctuation of the Qq, Ff after "fire," which Capell needlessly altered. "R. G. White's emendation, obtained by an insignificant change, is to me satisfactory," says Furness. It is highly probable that the explanation of the corruption is owing to the similarity of the three words, (1) "though," (2) "through," and (3) "thorough," the interpolation of an "r" changing a conjunction into a preposition, and thus altering the sense of the passage; and perhaps also to the fact that the phrase occurs in 399, *infra*.

391. *as bird from brier*] Steevens quotes from Minot (ed. Ritson, p. 31), "That are was blith als brid on brere." The expression was common in the old poets. *Cf.* Spenser, *Amoretti*, Sonnet 26.

397. Song] "The Song" F 1. "The songs I suppose were lost," says Johnson, "because they were not inserted in the players' parts, from which the drama was printed."

401. *blessed be*] Steevens quotes Chaucer's *Marchantes Tale* (575, ed. Morris), "And whan the bed was with the prest i-blessid," and also refers to the "Articles ordained by King Henry VII. for the Regulation of his Household," that this ceremony was observed at the marriage of a Princess: "All men at her comming to be voided, except woemen, till she be brought to her bedd; and the man both; he sittinge in his bedd in his shirte, with a gowne cast aboute him. Then the Bishoppe, with the Chaplaines, to come in, and *blesse the bedd*: then everie man to avoide without any drinke save the twoe estates, if they liste, priviely." Douce says, "Blessing the bed was observed at *all* marriages," and he gives the form from the Sarum Missal. See his *Illustrations* (1807), p. 124.

And the issue there create
Ever shall be fortunate.
So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be;
And the blots of nature's hand
Shall not in their issue stand;
Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,
Nor mark prodigious, such as are
Despised in nativity,
Shall upon their children be.
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gait;
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace with sweet peace;
And the owner of it blest,
Ever shall in safety rest.
Trip away;
Make no stay;
Meet me all by break of day.

[*Exeunt Oberon, Titania, and train.*

413. *gait*] Johnson; *gate* Qq, Ff. 416, 417.] the transposition of Staunton (Singer conj.); *Ever shall . . . blest* Qq, Ff; *Ever shall it safely* Rowe (ed. 2); *E'er shall it in safety* Malone; *Ever shall't in safety* Dyce (ed. 2). 418. *away;*] *away, then* Hanmer. 420. [Exeunt . . .] Capell, Exeunt Qq, omitted Ff.

402. *create*] Cf. "consecrate," 412, *post*, and *Sonnets*, lxxiv. 6, "The very part was consecrate to thee." In these forms of the participle "ed" is omitted after "t" or "d."

409. *prodigious*] portentous. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, I. v. 143, "prodigious birth of love"; and *King John*, III. i. 45:

"Full of unpleasing blots and sightless stains,
Lame, foolish, crooked, swart, prodigious,
Patch'd with foul moles and eye-offending marks."

416, 417.] Keightley, *Expositor*, p. 137, says: "This is the third or rather fourth transposition in this play. We may observe that twice before it was the second line of the couplet that commenced with 'Ever'; *i.e.* 'Ever shall be fortunate,' 'Ever true in loving be'; the inference of course being that it is the *second* line in this case also which should so commence."

Puck. If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here,
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend;
If you pardon, we will mend.
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call.
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends. [*Exit.*

424. *these*] *this* Q 2. 429. *I am*] *I'm* Capell; *an*] omitted F 3, 4. 436. [Exit] Capell; omitted Qq, Ff; Exeunt omnes Rowe.

421. *shadows*] Cf. 211 of this scene, "The best in this kind are but shadows," and the well-known passage in *Macbeth*, v. v. 24, "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player." "What the poet had put into the mouth of one of the characters [Theseus] in respect of the poor attempts of the Athenian clowns, he now, by the repetition of the word shadows in effect says for himself and his companions." Hunter, *New Illustrations* (1845), i. 298.

429. *honest Puck*] Furness says "honest" here refers merely to his veracity, as is shown by line 433. The name occurs in Spenser's *Epithalamion*, "Ne let *the pouke*, nor other evill sprights," etc.

431. *serpent's tongue*] "If we be dismissed without hisses." Johnson. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. i. 144, "An excellent device! so, if any of the audience hiss, you may cry, Well done, Hercules! now thou crushest the snake." Steevens quotes Markham's *English Arcadia* (1607), "But the nymph, after the custom of distrest tragedians, whose first act is entertained with a snaky salutation," etc.

435. *Give me your hands*] *Plaudite.* "Give us your applause. Wild and fantastical as this play is, all the parts in their various modes are well written, and give the kind of pleasure which the author designed." Johnson.

APPENDIX I

MR. P. A. DANIEL ON THE DURATION OF THE ACTION (*Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1877–79, Pt. II. p. 147).

DAY 1.—Act I. sc. i. Athens. In the first two speeches the proposed duration of the action seems pretty clearly set forth. By [them] I understand that four clear days are to intervene between the time of this scene and the day of the wedding. The night of this day No. 1 would, however, suppose five *nights* to come between.

DAY 2.—Act II., Act III., and part of sc. i. Act IV., are on the morrow night in the wood, and are occupied with the adventures of the lovers; with Oberon, Titania, and Puck; the Clowns. Daybreak being at hand, the fairies trip after the night's shade and leave the lovers and Bottom asleep.

DAY 3.—Act IV. sc. i. continued. Morning. May-day. Theseus, Hippolyta, etc., enter and awake the lovers with their hunting-horns.

In Act I. it will be remembered that four days were to elapse before Theseus's nuptials and Hermia's resolve; but here we see the plot is altered, for we are now only in the second day from the opening scene, and only one clear day has intervened between day No. 1 and this, the wedding-day.

Act IV. sc. ii.—Athens. Later in the day.
Act V.—In the Palace. Evening.

According to the opening speeches of Theseus and Hippolyta in Act I., we should have expected the dramatic action to have comprised five days, exclusive of that Act ; as it is, we have only three days inclusive of it.

Day 1.—Act I.
„ 2.—Acts II., III., and part of sc. i. Act IV.
„ 3.—Part of sc. i. Act IV., sc. ii. Act IV., and Act V.

APPENDIX II

Mr. P. A. Daniel's Note on II. i. 9—*the fairy "orbs" or circles.*

Halliwell describes these "circles" as being from four to eight feet *broad*, and from six to twelve feet in *diameter*. What is the distinction between the breadth and the diameter of a circle? A circle is a plane circumscribed by a line, every part of which line is equidistant from the centre of the plane.

But the circumscribing line may also be described as a *circle*; is it this line, ring, or belt which Halliwell describes as being "from four to eight feet broad"? [Probably so. —Ed.]

Whatever its breadth, this line, ring, or belt must be included in the diameter or breadth of the circle; but the highest figure which Halliwell gives for the diameter of the circle is twelve feet, and a ring eight feet broad would alone give sixteen feet, without taking into account the vacant inner space of the circle. Surely Halliwell could not intend to confine his *diameter* to this internal space. [Probably so. —Ed.] And then again, are fairy rings ever "from four to eight *feet* broad"?

Has Halliwell been misread, and should we for *feet* read *inches*? [Probably not.—Ed.]

I should like to read—"These rings are usually from four to eight *inches* broad, and *the entire circle* from six to twelve feet in diameter."

APPENDIX III

Passages from Chaucer's "Knightes Tale." (Ed. Morris.)

"Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus;
Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
And in his tyme swich a conquerour,
That gretter was ther non under the sonne.
Ful many a riche contré hadde he wonne;
That with his wisdom and his chivalrie
He conquered all the regne of Femynye,
That whilom was i-cleped Cithea;
And weddede the queen Ipolita,
And brought hire hoom with him in his contré,
With moche glorie and gret solempnité,
And eek hire yonge suster Emelye.
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duk to Athenes ryde,
And al his ost, in armes him biside.
And certes, if it nere to long to heere,
I wolde han told yow fully the manere,
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye
By Theseus, and by his chivalrye;
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bytwix Athenes and the Amazones;
And how asegid was Ypolita,
The faire hardy quyen of Cithea;
And of the feste that was at hire weddynge,
And of the tempest at hire hoom comynge;
But al that thing I most as now forbere.
I have, God wot, a large feeld to ere," . . .

"This passeth yeer by yeer, and day by day,
Til it fel oones in a morwe of May
That Emelie, that fairer was to seene
Than is the lilie on hire stalkes grene,
And fresscher than the May with floures newe—
For with the rose colour strof hire hewe,
I not which was the fairer of hem two—
Er it was day, as sche was wont to do,
Sche was arisen, and al redy dight;
For May wole have no sloggardye a nyght.
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte
And maketh him out of his sleepe sterte,
And seith, 'Arys, and do thin observance.'"

"The busy larke, messager of day,
Salueth in hire song the morwe gray;
And fyry Phebus ryseth up so bright,
That al the orient laugheth of the light,
And with his stremes dryeth in the greves
The silver dropes, hongyng on the leeves."

"And Arcite, that is in the court ryal
With Theseus, his squyer principal,
Is risen, and loketh on the mery day.
And for to doon his observance to May,"

"This mene I now by mighty Theseus,
That for to honten is so desirous,
And namely the grete hert in May,
That in his bed ther daweth him no day,
That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde
With hont and horn, and houndes him byside.
For in his hontyng hath he such delyt,
That it is al his joye and appetyt
To been himself the grete hertes bane,
For after Mars he serveth now Dyane."

"Duk Theseus, and al his companye,
Is comen hom to Athenes his cité,
With alle blys and gret solempnité."

" —ne how the Grekes pleye
The wake-pleyes, kepe I nat to seye ;
Who wrastleth best naked, with oyle enoynt,
Ne who that bar him best in no disjoynt.
I wol not telle eek how that they ben goon
Hoom til Athenes whan the pley is doon."

APPENDIX IV

The Story of Pyramus and Thisbe in Golding's Translation of "Ovid."

WITHIN the towne (of whose huge walles so monstrous high and thicke
The fame is giuen *Semyramis* for making them of bricke)
Dwelt hard together two yong folke in houses ioyned so nere
That vnder all one roofe well nie both twaine conueyed were.
The name of him was *Pyramus*, and *Thisbe* calde was she.
So faire a man in all the East was none aliue as he,
Nor nere a woman maide nor wife in beautie like to hir.
This neighbrod bred acquaintance first, this neyghbrod first did stirre
The secret sparkes, this neighbrod first an entrance in did showe
For loue to come to that to which it afterward did growe.
And if that right had taken place they had bene man and wife,
But still their Parents went about to let which (for their life)
They could not let. For both their heartes with equall flame did burne.
No man was priuie to their thoughts. And for to serue their turne
In steade of talke they vsed signes, the closelier they suppresst
The fire of loue, the fiercer still it raged in their brest.
The wall that parted house from house had riuen therein a crany
Which shronke at making of the wall, this fault not markt of any

Of many hundred yeares before (what doth not loue espie.)
These louers first of all found out, and made a way whereby
To talke togither secretly, and through the same did goe
Their louing whisprings verie light and safely to and fro.
Now as a toneside *Pyramus* and *Thisbe* on the tother
Stoode often drawing one of them the pleasant breath from other
O thou enuious wall (they sayd) why letst thou louers thus?
What matter were it if that thou permitted both of vs
In armes eche other to embrace? Or if thou thinke that this
Were ouermuch, yet mightest thou at least make roume to kisse.
And yet thou shalt not find vs churles: we think our selues in det
For this same piece of courtesie, in vouching safe to let
Our sayings to our friendly eares thus freely come and goe,
Thus hauing where they stoode in vaine complayned of their woe,
When night drew nere, they bade adew and eche gaue kisses sweete
Vnto the parget on their side, the which did neuer meete.
Next morning with hir cherefull light had driuen the starres aside
And *Phebus* with his burning beames the dewie grasse had dride.
These louers at their wonted place by foreappointment met.
Where after much complaint and mone they couenanted to get
Away from such as watched them, and in the Euening late
To steale out of their fathers house and eke the Citie gate.
And to thentent that in the fieldes they strayde not vp and downe
They did agree at *Ninus* Tumb to meete without the towne,
And tarie vnderneath a tree that by the same did grow
Which was a faire high Mulberie with fruite as white as snow,

Hard by a cool and trickling spring. This bargaine pleasde them both
And so daylight (which to their thought away but slowly goth)
Did in the Ocean fall to rest, and night from thence doth rise.
Assoone as darkenesse once was come, straight *Thisbe* did deuise
A shift to wind hir out of doores, that none that were within
Perceyued hir: And muffling hir with clothes about hir chin,
That no man might discerne hir face, to *Ninus* Tumb she came
Vnto the tree, and sat her downe there vnderneath the same.
Loue made hir bold. But see the chance, there comes besmerde with blood,
About the chappes a Lionesse all foming from the wood
From slaughter lately made of Kine to staunch hir bloudie thurst
With water of the foresaid spring. Whome *Thisbe* spying furst
A farre by moonelight, therevpon with fearfull steppes gan flie,
And in a darke and yrksome caue did hide hirselfe thereby.
And as she fled away for hast she let hir mantle fall
The whych for feare she left behind not looking backe at all.
Now when the cruell Lionesse hir thurst had stanched well,
In going to the Wood she found the slender weed that fell
From *Thisbe*, which with bloudie teeth in pieces she did teare
The night was somewhat further spent ere *Pyramus* came there
Who seeing in the suttle sande the print of Lions paw,
Waxt pale for feare. But when also the bloudie cloke he saw
All rent and torne, one night (he sayd) shall louers two confounde,
Of which long life deserued she of all that liue on ground.

My soule deserues of this mischaunce the perill for to beare.
I wretch haue bene the death of thee, which to this place of feare
Did cause thee in the night to come, and came not here before.
My wicked limmes and wretched guttes with cruell teeth therefore
Deuour ye O ye Lions all that in this rocke doe dwell.
But Cowardes vse to wish for death. The slender weede that fell
From *Thisbe* vp he takes, and streight doth beare it to the tree,
Which was appointed erst the place of meeting for to bee.
And when he had bewept and kist the garment which he knew,
Receyue thou my bloud too (quoth he) and therewithall he drew
His sworde, the which among his guttes he thrust, and by and by
Did draw it from the bleeding wound beginning for to die,
And cast himselfe vpon his backe, the blood did spin on hie
As when a Conduite pipe is crackt, the water bursting out
Doth shote itselfe a great way off and pierce the Ayre about.
The leaues that were vpon the tree besprincled with his blood
Were died blacke. The roote also bestained as it stoode,
A deepe darke purple colour straight vpon the Berries cast.
Anon scarce ridded of hir feare with which she was agast,
For doubt of disapointing him commes *Thisbe* forth in hast,
And for hir louer lookes about, reioycing for to tell
How hardly she had scapt that night the daunger that befell.

And as she knew right well the place and facion of the tree
(As whych she saw so late before): euen so when she did see
The colour of the Berries turnde, she was vncertain whither
It were the tree at which they both agreed to meete togither.
While in this doubtful stounde she stoode, she cast hir eye aside
And there beweltred in his bloud hir louer she espide
Lie sprawling with his dying limmes: at which she started backe,
And looked pale as any Box, a shuddring through hir stracke,
Euen like the Sea which sodenly with whissing noyse doth moue,
When with a little blast of winde it is but toucht aboue.
But when approching nearer him she knew it was hir loue,
She beate hir brest, she shrieked out, she tare hir golden heares
And taking him betweene hir armes did wash his wounds with teares,
She meynt hir weeping with his bloud, and kissing all his face
(Which now became as colde as yse) she cride in wofull case
Alas what chaunce my *Pyramus* hath parted thee and mee?
Make aunswere O my *Pyramus*: It is thy *Thisb*, euen shee
Whome thou doste loue most heartely that speaketh vnto thee.
Giue eare and rayse thy heauie heade. He hearing *Thisbes* name,
Lift vp his dying eyes and hauing seene hir closde the same.
But when she knew hir mantle there and saw his scabberd lie
Without the swoorde: Vnhappy man thy loue hath made thee die:

Thy loue (she said) hath made thee slea thy selfe. This hand of mine
Is strong inough to doe the like. My loue no lesse than thine
Shall giue me force to worke my wound. I will pursue the dead.
And wretched woman as I am, it shall of me be sed
That like as of thy death I was the only cause and blame,
So am I thy companion eke and partner in the same,
For death which only coulde alas a sunder part vs twaine,
Shall neuer so disseuer vs but we will meete againe.
And you the Parentes of vs both, most wretched folke alyue,
Let this request that I shall make in both our names byliue
Entreate you to permit that we whome chaste and stedfast loue
And whome euen death hath ioynde in one, may as it doth behoue
In one graue be together layd. And thou vnhappie tree
Which shroudest now the corse of one, and shalt anon through mee
Shroude two, of this same slaughter holde the sicker signes for ay
Blacke be the colour of thy fruite and mourning like alway,
Such as the murder of vs twaine may euermore bewray.
This said, she tooke the sword yet warme with slaughter of hir loue
And setting it beneath hir brest, did to hir heart it shoue.
Her prayer with the Gods and with their Parentes tooke effect.
For when the fruite is throughly ripe, the Berrie is bespect
With colour tending to a blacke. And that which after fire
Remained, rested in one Tumbe as *Thisbe* did desire.

A New Sonet of Pyramus and Thisbe.

To the, Downe right Squier.

1. Ou Dames (I say) that climbe the mount
of *Helicon*,
Come on with me, and giue account,
what hath been don:
Come tell the chaunce ye Muses all,
and dolefull newes,
Which on these Louers did befall,
which I accuse.
In *Babilon* not long agone,
a noble Prince did dwell:
Whose daughter bright dimd ech ones sight,
so farre she did excel.

2. An other Lord of high renowne,
who had a sonne:
And dwelling there within the towne
great loue begunne:
Pyramus this noble Knight,
I tel you true:
Who with the loue of *Thisbe* bright,
did cares renue:
It came to passe, their secrets was,
beknowne vnto them both:
And then in minde, their place do finde,
where they their loue vnclothe.

3. This loue they vse long tract of time,
till it befell:
At last they promised to meet at prime
by *Minus* well:
Where they might louingly imbrace,
in loues delight:
That he might see his *Thisbies* face
and she his sight:

In ioyfull case, she approcht the place,
where she her *Pyramus*
Had thought to viewd, but was renewd
to them most dolorous.

4. Thus while she staies for *Pyramus*,
there did proceed:
Out of the wood a Lion fierce,
made *Thisbie* dreed:
And as in haste she fled awaie,
her Mantle fine:
The Lion tare in stead of praie,
till that the time
That *Pyramus* proceeded thus,
and see how lion tare
The Mantle this of *Thisbie* his,
he desperately doth fare.

5. For why he thought the lion had
faire *Thisbie* slaine.
And then the beast with his bright blade,
he slew certaine:
Then made he mone and said alas,
(O wretched wight)
Now art thou in a woful case,
For *Thisbie* bright:
O Gods aboue, my faithfull loue
shal neuer faile this need:
For this my breath by fatall death,
shal weaue *Atropos* threed.

6. Then from his sheath he drew his blade,
and to his hart
He thrust the point, and life did vade,
with painfull smart:
Then *Thisbie* she from cabin came
with pleasure great,
And to the well apase she ran,
there for to treat:

And to discusse, with *Pyramus*
of al her former feares.
And when slaine she, found him truly,
she shed foorth bitter teares.

7. When sorrow great that she had made,
she took in hand
The bloudie knife, to end her life,
by fatall hand.
You Ladies all, peruse and see,
the faithfulnesse,
How these two Louers did agree,
to die in distresse :
You Muses waile, and do not faile,
but still do you lament :
These louers twaine, who with such paine,
did die so well content.

I. THOMSON.

Finis.

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